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The Week-end Review

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CONTENTS

COMMENTS . . . . . Page 781
WHY LABOUR HATES "BEDAUX" 784
PATRIOTISM ON THE SCREEN. By Aylmer Vallance . 785
A LONDON DIARY 786
THIS ENGLAND 787
A GOOD POINT ABOUT FOX-HUNTING. By Y. Y. . 788
DACHAU 789
THE NEW LEAGUE. By Sagittarius 790
CORRESPONDENCE 790
From Philip S. Mumford; Rev. Henry Carter; Charles Sumner; Randall Swingler; Emiley Hobson; Israel Cohen; S. W. H. Bayliss; C. Fulford; Philip Jordan; Lord Esher; Hugh Ross Williamson; Alfred Praga, R.B.A.; John Carter; Ruth Robertson.
SPANISH JOURNEY. I. By Geoffrey Brereton . . 793
DEGAS. By Graham Bell 794
THE MOVIES. By Peter Galway . . . Page 795
PLAYS AND PICTURES 796
BOOKS IN GENERAL. By David Garnett . . . 797
REVIEWS:
Master Kung. By G. W. Stonier . . . 798
Novelists on Statesmen. By F. A. Wright . . 798
New Novels. By V. S. Pritchett . . . 800
Flowers of Mediocrity. By Peter Quennell . 802
Porson. By Raymond Mortimer 804
African Journey. By W. M. Macmillan . . 806
Professor Pigou—Referee. By G. D. H. Cole . 806
SHORTER NOTICES 808
GRAMOPHONE NOTES. By Desmond Shawe-Taylor 809
WEEK-END COMPETITIONS 810
CROSSWORD 814
THE WEEK IN THE CITY. By Dives . . . 816

THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—The Week-end Review. *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenaeum, Week-end Review.*

THE Japanese attack has closed in on Shanghai, and the main Chinese army was forced to withdraw on Tuesday to a new position some six miles west of the city. A smaller force is reported, as we write, to be cut off—but prepared to fight to the last bullet—at Nantao, which adjoins the French Concession to the south of the International Settlement. From other fronts comes news of heavy fighting, especially round Taiyuan, the capital of Shansi Province. Meanwhile the peace-makers in the West are marking time till Japan sends her answer to the renewed invitation to come to Brussels. A further complication is Italy's signature of the Anti-Comintern Pact, which, in Hitler's words, has made the European "axis" into "a great world political triangle." This will have no immediate effects on the military situation in China; but it may well have repercussions on the policy of various Powers. Russia, against whom in particular the Pact is directed, is angry and apprehensive. How far Mr. Litvinov's departure from Brussels is connected with it, we do not know; but it is understood that he will return if the Japanese reply makes his presence desirable. Within the last few days a new idea of mediation has emerged—with Germany, the "mutual friend," acting as honest broker. Germany's ideological affection for Japan and her commercial and other interests in China are patent. But can she—or does she want to—persuade Japan to terms of peace that will be tolerable to China?

General Franco and the "Agents"

Mr. Eden put up a strong defence of the Government's decision to exchange "agents" with General Franco. The rebels are in effective occupation of two-thirds of continental Spain and practically all her overseas territory; there are immense British interests involved in these areas, and immense difficulties in protecting them. The appointment of properly accredited agents with "some sub-agents," on either side will, it is hoped, help to smooth out the difficulties. It will not, said the Foreign Secretary emphatically, in any way constitute "recognition" of Franco by the British Government; these agents are not to have diplomatic status. All this looks reasonable on the face of it. But the question is what may be behind the face. Labour and Liberal speakers in the House on Monday voiced their suspicions and fears of what this arrangement may lead to, of the advantage it may be to Franco and his allies, of its significance as regards the Government's own policy. It may be said, of course, that Mr. So and So in Burgos and, say, the Duke of Alba in London will never be serious factors in the Spanish war; but it remains unpleasantly true that their appointment looks to many people here and to still more people abroad like a first step towards recognising Franco.

Anglo-American Trade

On matters of high policy the Prime Minister said little of substance at the Guildhall Banquet. Expressions of satisfaction at our material prosperity (with the usual rebuke for those observers who descry signs of trade recession) combined with pious hopes of peace in the Far East and general betterment of international relations—these form the common denominator of ministerial oratory. One piece of news, however, Mr. Chamberlain did communicate. Informal talks with the United States, he said, on the subject of a trade agreement had begun. Whether they will end in any substantial abatement of tariffs is another matter. If President Roosevelt is to concede lower duties even on imports of British textiles and other specialities which could enter the U.S. market in larger quantities without serious disturbance to American industry, he must secure in return a reduction in the British tariff on cereals, fruit and farm products, to say nothing of motor cars. If the President could overcome opposition from his own farming interests and reduce the U.S. tariff on primary products such as wool, butter and canned milk from the Dominions, the Commonwealth might be willing to modify the preferences embodied in the Ottawa Agreements and let the United States have the benefit of an intermediate British tariff—provided always that Mr. Chamberlain can quell the protests of agriculturists in this country. The whole problem bristles with difficulties, and, if trade depression in the U.S.A. grows worse, even the present slender chances of agreement may be lost.

Socialists and the Front Populaire

The French Socialist Congress, by a very large majority, gave M. Blum the support he wanted for remaining in the Chautemps Government. M. Blum, in his speech, said that the Socialists would have resigned from the Government unless the Radical Congress had withdrawn its resolution criticising Socialist "disloyalty" at the recent elections and calling for an undoing of the social legislation of the Blum ministry. The resolution finally adopted by the Socialist Congress declared unequivocally for the maintenance of the forty-hour week and the rest of M. Blum's social legislation, and thus plainly told the Radicals that the Government would collapse if M. Bonnet tried to force his threatened revision of the social laws. It was clear, both from M. Blum's speech and from the general tone of the Congress, that foreign affairs still dominate the situation, and that the widening of the Tokio-Berlin Pact to include Italy has strengthened the desire in France to maintain Left unity. Meanwhile, at their separate Congress, M. Flandin and his friends of the Right-Centre were re-asserting their desire for a Government of "national union" based on the exclusion of the extreme Left; but for the present their wish seems unlikely to be fulfilled—at all events unless a final breakdown of the Spanish negotiations brings the Radicals face to face with an insistent Socialist demand for open action on the side of the Spanish Government.

American Labour in Negotiation

Contrary to expectations which were widely entertained, the negotiations between the Committee for Industrial Organisation and the American Federation of Labour have not so far broken down. At this week's meetings an attempt has been made to deal with the vexed question of "jurisdiction," when the craft principle favoured by the A.F. of L. cuts across the inclusive industrial form of organisation sponsored by the C.I.O. in the mass-producing industries. There is also a proposal for creating a joint interim body to arrange for joint recruiting campaigns on a provisional basis while a lasting settlement is being worked out. It is difficult, at this distance, to decide how far there is a real chance of unity on an agreed basis, or how far the rival groups are merely playing for time and manoeuvring for tactical advantage. Clearly, there is from the standpoint of both a great deal to be said for coming together if they can. The A.F. of L. has no chance, by its craft methods, of capturing the industries which are the real strongholds of Big Business; while the C.I.O., even if it succeeds in organising the main body of workers in these industries, can hardly go on winning if its activities are blocked by the refusal to strike of a smaller group of skilled workers belonging to the A.F. of L. craft Unions.

The Lost Legion

The Ministry of Labour, in its annual count of the insured population, has discovered this year an unexpected increase of more than 100,000 over the estimate on which the previous month's figures of "workers in employment" had been based. The result is that the apparent rise in the numbers employed during the past month is turned into a fall, owing to the under-estimation of the numbers previously in insured employment. For the past month, therefore, the Ministry has to record a decrease of 47,000 in employment, as well as an increase of 51,000 in the registered unemployed. This falling-off of employment is in fact largely seasonal, and a good deal of it is due to the decline in the hotel and boarding-house and seaside distributive trades. But there is also a fall in building and in shipping, and even, surprisingly, in general engineering. Coal mining, on the other hand, records a small seasonal improvement, and a decline in the woollen trades is more than offset by a further improvement in the cotton industry. As for the Ministry's wrong estimate, the explanation is, presumably, to be found partly in an unsuspected transfer from uninsured to insured trades and partly in a return of retired workers to employment in occupations affected by the armament boom. But the rise in unemployment, in face of this boom and of the alleged shortage of labour in certain areas, is disquieting.

More Divorce Judges

The state of business in the Probate, Divorce and Admiralty Division is one of the minor scandals of the day. There is a huge accumulation of divorce cases awaiting trial, and the list is likely to become heavier with the coming into force of the new Matrimonial Causes Act. The Bill introduced by the Attorney-General on Monday proposes the appointment of two new Divorce judges—an obvious and simple-looking remedy. But critics of the proposal—Labour, Liberal and Conservative—found it too simple. Sir Stafford Cripps favoured a reorganisation of the Divisions of the High Court, and thought that the right course at this moment was to appoint the two new judges to the King's Bench, so that they could do general service as well as divorce work;

and he was followed by Mr. Clement Davies with a powerful argument for the hearing of any divorce suit (and not merely undefended and "poor persons'" cases) at Assizes. To many people of moderate means, as he pointed out, it means a ruinous expense to have to bring their suits to London. And from the judge's point of view, it was deplorable that he should spend his whole time on nothing but divorce cases. The weight of reason in the debate was with the critics; but the Government had the votes, and the Bill passed its second reading by a large majority. Its passage, however, the Solicitor-General said, will not rule out larger measures later dealing with judicial reforms.

Family Disinheritance

By general admission hard cases arise under wills in which testators, on their death, dispose of their estates to satisfy malevolence or irresponsible whim and leave in destitution widows and children for whose maintenance they were responsible in life. This is an anomaly which should not be permitted by law, especially where children under twenty-one are left unprovided for; but it is questionable whether the Family Provisions Bill, which just missed a third reading last Session and has now again secured a second reading, enacts the right remedy. The Bill does not give widow, widower or children the right to a specified portion of the deceased husband's or wife's estate. It provides simply that they may appeal to the Courts, which are to have power to set any will aside and make adequate provision for them. This opens a vista of litigation and leaves the Courts without any clear direction as to the limits within which a testator's wishes should be contravened. To follow the practice of Scots law and make it obligatory on a testator to leave at least two-thirds of his money to his wife and children (or one-half to his wife, if childless) would be simpler but would go much too far. Cases can readily be imagined in which a partner in a legally undissolved marriage might have legitimate grounds for desiring to will a larger proportion of his money away from the surviving partner, whose personal means might be ample. The fairest plan would be to enact a small "disinheritable" minimum—say, half the Scottish minimum—with power delegated to the Courts to increase the figure in cases where this amount could be proved inadequate for reasonable maintenance, having regard to the testator's total means.

Air Raid Precautions Costs

Having said its "last word" in the matter of apportioning the costs of air-raid precautions as between the Treasury and the local authorities, the Government has introduced a Bill giving its proposals legislative form. The Government undertakes to provide gas masks and protective clothing, decontaminating equipment and fire-fighting appliances. In addition, it will make grants ranging from 60 to 75 per cent., according to the needs and resources of various areas, towards the cost of supplementary municipal services such as casualty clearing stations, dug-outs and air-raid volunteer corps. Finally, it will pay up to 85 per cent. of the expenditure in excess of the proceed of a penny rate. The attitude of the local authorities has been that defence against air attack is a national concern and should fall exclusively, like the Air Force Vote, on the taxpayer. Against this, the Government is entitled to argue that local authorities should not have the disposal of funds for the raising of which they are not responsible, and that the precautionary measures will be largely a development of existing locally managed services.

The National Book Fair

Inevitably the National Book Fair at Dorland House suffers from an appearance of sameness each year. The books and arrangement are different, but books on shelves they remain. Yet it is to be hoped the publishers will continue to rely, for colour, on the jackets of their books and avoid the pitfalls of garish display. Unlike so many shows in which dogs, cars or chrysanthemums are the exhibits, this one can be seen in comparative calm; aggressive selling is non-existent. Books may be handled and bought at leisure. And not only books—our own *This England*, decorated by Low, seems to be selling like cigarettes. All but two well-known publishers are showing, and there is a welcome tendency not to confine the exhibits exclusively to the season's new books. Despite increasing production costs, there is as yet no apparent rise in prices, nor a decline in either the quantity or standard of production. The classified section is a compromise, and not altogether a satisfactory one, between the rival systems of each publisher exhibiting his own books on his own stand and grouping all the books in the Fair according to subjects. At present this section is the Cinderella. It goes so far, but not nearly far enough, and needs more room, more subjects and more books than eleven little cubby-holes provide. The talks are too popular a draw to be abandoned, so the lecture hall must remain as such. How is more space to be obtained? Here is a winter problem for the National Book Council.

Ramsay MacDonald

Mr. MacDonald will not go down to history as a great Prime Minister, but as a great popular leader and as the architect of the Labour Party. He will be remembered as a man of courage who did not take the easy line in 1914, and who played an honourable role at the time of the Stockholm Conference. He was an expert Parliamentarian as well as a great orator in the country—the two things only occasionally go together—and he might have done something very much worth while in the difficult circumstances of the 1924 Government if he had not worn himself out by trying to be both Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary. The most inaccurate of the charges constantly brought against him was that he was a "dictator" inside his Party; the opposite—too much the opposite—was the case. He was bad at making up his mind and indeed at making any conclusive and unambiguous statement. He found his own colleagues increasingly uncongenial and was socially more at home when he became, as he himself admitted, the prisoner of the Tories. His inner conflicts became even less soluble, the phrases vaguer and the façade less impressive. It was his tragedy to break up the Party he had built and to bolster up the Party which he had always fought and which now successfully used him: he, the pacifist, led the party of the armament makers; he, the ardent free-trader, defended tariffs; he, the Socialist leader, became Society's darling.

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WHY LABOUR HATES "BEDAUX"

AMERICAN Labour, ready enough to welcome personally the ex-King of England, had no glad hand for the friend of Mr. Charles E. Bedaux, under whose ciceronage the Duke of Windsor's now abandoned tour of the United States was to have been made. Mr. Bedaux is of French-Canadian origin, but has long been settled in the U.S.A. As long ago as 1911, in the early days of "Scientific Management" and the "Taylor system," he conceived the idea that industrial efficiency would be greatly improved if all human labour could be scientifically measured in terms of a common unit, so that wages could be made directly responsive to the amount of effort expended. To-day, Mr. Bedaux, having established his labour unit to the satisfaction both of himself and of many hundreds of business firms which he has persuaded to install his system, is one of the world's best-hated men. Despite many attempts to persuade the workers that "Bedaux" is really in their interest as much as in that of the employers, the Trade Unions in every country into which the system has been introduced remain for the most part resolutely hostile.

"Bedaux" is essentially international. The International Bedaux Co. of America has flung out subsidiaries or branches in one country after another. It has offices, either directly or through its subsidiaries, in New York, London, Berlin, Paris, Amsterdam, Stockholm, Sydney and other places. In Great Britain it is represented by British Bedaux, Ltd., with a capital of £300,000, and a large staff of engineers who go about from firm to firm installing their system. Its progress here was slow at first, and wherever the workers were organised they put up a stiff fight against its introduction. But it has been much more rapid in the last few years, especially when the slump weakened Trade Union resistance, or in the new trades in which the workers are largely unskilled and often hardly organised.

What is "Bedaux," and what is wrong with it, from the workers' point of view? Mr. Bedaux and his engineers set out to measure every sort of human labour to which their system is to be applied in terms of a standard unit, which they call a "B." A "B" is, in effect, the amount of any given type of work which, according to the Bedaux experts, a worker ought to be able to do in a minute, after allowance has been made for the necessary "rest," or discontinuity of effort—an allowance varying with the character of the job. When a Bedaux engineer comes into a factory, he begins by making an elaborate time-study of each operation, in order to establish to his own satisfaction—or, as he would claim, "scientifically"—how many "B's" ought to be allowed in each case. Each job is thus "priced" at a certain number of "B" units; and so many "B's" therefore become the standard allowance for the job—to be translated into money rates of wages, not by the Bedaux experts, but by collective bargaining, where Trade Unionism is strong, or without it, where the employer can impose his own terms.

So many "B's," or "B units," having been allowed for each job, every worker is guaranteed (at any rate in Great Britain) a time rate of wages corresponding to the number of "B's" allowed. This is paid irrespective of actual output; and, as in many other bonus systems, the worker who produces more than the standard output is paid something in addition. But this extra payment is calculated at a lower rate than the piecework equivalent of the standard wage. In most cases, if a worker produces "B's" in excess of the standard, three-quarters of the payment for the excess goes to him, whereas the remaining quarter goes to "indirect labour," the supervising or other staff not on "piecework," and thus gives the foremen and setters-up a special inducement to speed up the actual operators of the machines. This system, like the "premium bonus system," of which it is only an adaptation, is keenly resented by the workers, on the ground that it involves a fall in piecework prices as output is increased, whereas they claim that they ought to receive more, or at the least as much, for the additional efforts which they are compelled to put forth.

If this were all "Bedaux" involved, it would be no more than one among some hundreds of patent systems of wage-payments, designed to stimulate the workers to greater intensity of labour. It is doubtful whether, in its early days, it was more than this, or at all events much more. But in recent years, while adhering to their claim to have devised a scientifically accurate measure of units of real labour, the Bedaux engineers have come to put much more stress on factory reorganisation, as apart from mere speeding up. When they come into a works, they advise not only on methods of wage-payment, but also on factory lay-out, plant, and methods of production organisation—all of course from the standpoint of securing higher output and therewith reducing labour cost. They are "efficiency engineers," telling the employer how to run the producing side of his business so as to elicit from the worker the last ounce of output.

Why do the workers object to "Bedaux?" Partly because they do not, and perhaps are not meant to, understand the elaborate system by which the wages due to them are calculated. The Bedaux wage-sheets mean nothing to the average worker; and their unintelligibility induces a belief that he is being "done." But much more the workers hate "Bedaux" because its very basis is to treat human labour as a machine, and to rob it of all individuality. If the worker is to produce his "B's," he must reduce his motions to precisely those which the Bedaux engineers prescribe. Doubtless the experts claim that they have made in their allocation of "B's," which are mixed units of energy and rest, a due allowance for relaxation appropriate to each particular job. But the worker does not accept this. He would much prefer straight piecework, which would leave him free to go about the job in his own individual way. He would prefer more freedom, even if that meant rather smaller earnings.

But the worker is also uncertain whether he really gets paid any more for the extra effort which "Bedaux" compels him to make—because he is in danger of the sack if his output falls below the standard number of "B's." He feels that "Bedaux" reacts on Trade Union bargaining power, sets man against man, and gives the supervising staff an unfair inducement towards speeding up. Certainly in most factories where the system has been introduced, earnings appear to have risen, usually by from 10 to 20 per cent.; but productivity per worker appears to have risen very much more—sometimes, according to the Bedaux Company's claims, by well over

100 per cent., and in many cases by from 50 to 70 per cent. The workers feel that this means they are being cheated; nor are they convinced by the argument that most of the saving is probably being passed on in reduced prices to the consumers. They hold that they are being inhumanly speeded up; and they resent it, even where the result is that they earn rather more. For might they not have secured the same, or greater, advances, without "Bedaux" to plague them, by normal collective bargaining?

Moreover, the workers believe very widely that "Bedaux" breeds unemployment. Only the younger and physically stronger and more alert among them, they say, can stand the strain of the productive conditions introduced by the Bedaux engineers. The older, the weaker and the less adaptable are thrown on the scrap-heap; and their labour can be dispensed with the more easily because of the greatly increased *per capita* output of those who remain. It may be answered that speeding up to an extent which involves the displacement of the older and weaker workers is by no means a monopoly of "Bedaux." It is going on everywhere—from the coal mines to big offices equipped with mechanical calculators. "Bedaux" is in this sense only one instance of a common tendency of our day.

That is true. But "Bedaux" has a name. A firm may be able to do for itself, without calling in a Bedaux engineer, everything that he could do for it. But Mr. Bedaux and his coadjutors make a business—a very profitable business, it is understood—of inciting business men to adopt their particular methods of speeding up; and the Bedaux engineers have a reputation for doing the thing on the grand scale. Even though the Trade Unions claim that, in some factories, they have by collective bargaining so modified the system as to render it innocuous, every attempt to extend it provokes fresh hostility, wherever labour is organised and articulate. For a large part of the working class, the very word "Bedaux" has become a symbol of the inhuman grinding of the capitalist machine.

We know nothing of Mr. Charles Bedaux, or of his motives. He may be, for all we know, the most humane of men. But the case for and against Bedaux rests not on motives but on results. Nor is the measurement of results simply a matter of relative labour costs to the employer. It is also a matter of what some economists have called the "disutility" of labour. It is not socially expedient to get the last ounce of output, when to do this involves making toil irksome and wearing beyond reason. The workers will never accept the one-sided claim that the pace and method of labour can be settled for them by the employer, or by experts in his service, without regard for their feelings or desires. They will never accept the claim that "Bedaux" is scientific, any more than they accepted the same claim when it was made for the Taylor system. They will deny, as the Trades Union Congress did in its report on "Bedaux" some years ago, that there is any way of measuring units of work scientifically, without regard for the worker's feelings. Advocates of "Bedaux" urge that it is illogical to concede the economic utility of improving the efficiency of machines and not to explore every possibility of rendering the human machine in the factory more efficient. It is precisely this underlying conception of the system—man as a machine—which accounts for the resentment it evokes.

PATRIOTISM ON THE SCREEN

IN a recent invitation to the public to subscribe to a large issue of capital, Odeon Theatres, Ltd., inserted prominently in its prospectus a statement that the directors of the company undertook not to indulge in any shape or form, directly or indirectly, in the production of British films. That it should have been thought essential or desirable to give such an assurance to potential investors is sufficient commentary on the situation in which the film-producing industry of this country finds itself after a decade of State protection. Encouraged by the Films Act of 1927 and dazzled by the rich rewards falling into the lap of Hollywood, vulgarians, gamblers and crooks have had a ten years' run for other people's money in British films. Here and there a director of artistic integrity has emerged, a worth-while picture has been produced. But in general the Nemesis has been artistic and financial bankruptcy. The crooks, gamblers and vulgarians of Hollywood were richer, better organised and cleverer.

So the Government, in its wisdom, decides that the moribund British film industry is to be given a fresh lease of life under the shelter of a revised form of protection. Riddled by criticism in the House, the new Films Bill has been sent to Committee, where some endeavour will presumably be made to give the amorphous creature shape and purpose. As it stands, the measure establishes a record in illogicality and ineffectiveness. The unhappy President of the Board of Trade, who declared during the second reading debate that he regarded British films as an integral part of our national defences, but admitted that his own pulses were quickened most by "Mickey Mouse," has an unenviable task in steering his Bill to port. Faced with the intricacies of a complex trade whose constituent elements—producers, renters and exhibitors—are at perpetual war, Mr. Oliver Stanley has apparently not the faintest notion what he wants to do nor how to do it.

Reduced to essentials, the problem resolves itself into two questions: how can the American film combines be prevented from establishing a strangle-hold over British exhibitors and audiences; and how can British film producers be put commercially on their feet? The Act of 1927 sought a solution by providing that the American-controlled renters (*anglice*, wholesale distributors of films) in this country must purchase a stated quota of British-made films, and that exhibitors must show a corresponding proportion on the screen. Since the quota was specified in terms of film "footage," the renters naturally defeated the intentions of the Act by arranging for the production in this country of the cheapest possible pictures, which have earned the contemptuous soubriquet of "quota quickies." Some of these they utilised to fill exhibitors' quotas, to the wrath of audiences; others they threw on the scrap-heap. The exhibitor had to do his best to fulfil his quota requirements out of the limited supply of British pictures possessing adequate entertainment value. Meanwhile, with few exceptions, the big "feature" films made in this country lost money through failure to secure entry into the American market, either because they were not good enough or because the vested interests in the United States shut them out, and the United Kingdom alone was not a paying market.

Under the new Bill an effort is made to kill the "quota quickie." No feature film will count for quota purposes unless it costs £7,500 on "labour" account, which means in practice a total expenditure of £15,000. A film costing £45,000 in all is to count double for quota requirements, and an America-controlled renter who buys the foreign rights of a British film for £20,000 may count the film at its actual length for the purposes of his quota in this country. The prescribed quota for feature films is to be temporarily reduced, in the case both of renters and exhibitors, but is to be gradually increased again; and a separate quota for short films is established.

In the case of "shorts"—a branch of film production in which the enterprise of a few pioneers has successfully created a distinctive British craft—the quota protection amounts to

some twenty seconds per average programme, and no test of cost or quality is imposed. The Bill can hardly be acclaimed as a charter for the British "documentary," whose representation of national culture might be regarded as playing some part in Mr. Stanley's conception of psychological "national defences." But even in the case of full-length "features" the stimulus given to the British film-producing industry by the Bill is illusory. Why should an American firm of renters pay £20,000 for the foreign rights of a British film when they can manufacture, for renters' quota purposes, a film of the same length costing nominally £15,000, but whose costs can be manipulated by including under labour charges the salaries of a couple of dummy directors and a bevy of bogus scenario-writers? What British film-producing company will be encouraged to spend £15,000 on a film (or, for that matter, £150,000) when the prospect is that, quota or no quota, the picture will lose money unless it gets a showing in the United States? And what market is really reserved for British productions if the exhibitors' quota can be filled by films manufactured *ad hoc* by foreign renters and sold dirt cheap to the cinemas? All that the Bill is likely to achieve is a diminution in the number of "quota pictures," to the detriment of the independent exhibitor. Their quality will remain fifth-rate, their chances of storming the American citadel infinitely remote.

In these circumstances the Government's decision to veto the recommendation of the Moyne Committee and make cost, not approved quality, the test for eligibility to quota is a minor point. Indeed, the Bill provides that the Board of Trade may certify as eligible for quota purposes a feature film of exceptional entertainment value whose cost is less than £15,000. The real demerit of the Government's plan is that it neither gives adequate protection in the home market to the frail plant of private enterprise in British film production nor offers any prospect of assisting British pictures collectively to secure a share of the world market. If the intention was to ensure that British audiences, whether they liked it or not, should see on the screen a proportion of "genuine" British films, a proviso should have been inserted in the Bill that films made to satisfy renters' quota should not be eligible for exhibitors' quota. In that case the renters' quota stipulation would become, in law, as it largely is in practice, a pure employment-giving tax on the profits of foreign renters. The exhibitors' quota would be a close preserve for films made by "British" capitalists, even if the producers be Jews and the directors and technicians assembled from every polyglot quarter of Europe and America. Alternatively, if the aim was to legislate British films, regardless of their merits, on to the world map, there was no point in bothering to force American renters to manufacture here a stated number of somewhat more costly but still discreditable "quota runts." The Government should have concentrated either on making it much more attractive financially, as Mr. Ostrer has suggested, for American renters to buy the foreign rights of British films, or tried to blackmail Uncle Sam, by threats of a penal tax on foreign film showings, to agree to import a certain number of British feature films per annum.

If it felt, as it well might feel, that the British film producer, after ten years' State protection, hardly deserved that diplomatic pressure of this type should be invoked on his behalf against a friendly country, the Government might have accepted the proposal of the Moyne Committee, that the industry should be subjected to the tutelage of a Commission, charged with plenary powers, to direct its organisation, finance and productions. From a plan so redolent of Bolshevism the Government recoiled; and it may be conceded that regimentation by Commission is not an ideal scheme for a form of enterprise which is half commerce, half art. Nevertheless, whatever defects a film industry controlled by an authority on semi-State lines might have, its products could not be worse than the great majority of British pictures produced in the last ten years. They would at least have, in all probability, a degree of taste and intelligence, no matter how chilled by academic respectability. As it is, the Films Bill offers to cinema audiences no prospect of better British films, and to the British producing industry no encouragement to take risks, no greater chance of attracting to its service men of imagination and ability. If the British film cannot stand on its own legs, this typical compromise of muddled patriotism will not avail to prop it up.

AYLMER VALLANCE

A LONDON DIARY

I HAVE been to a lot of trouble at one time or another to ask people who have known Ramsay MacDonald intimately to explain the peculiar pathos and tragedy of his career. I do not refer to his change of sides in 1931; there may be good reasons for changing one's political party and in any case that was only the climax of a long evolution. I mean how it came about that the keen young man of the people, with the fine Highland carriage, the noble voice, and the generous ideals, whose popularity at one time could only be compared to Gladstone's—how this first promising and then successful leader became such a pathetic figure towards the end of his life. The result of these inquiries has been a mass of interesting material about MacDonald as a political leader, a colleague and a friend. Some of this had better wait until another time, but there is one central point that one may make, I hope, without offence or unkindness. On cultural subjects MacDonald could listen and learn; he was genuinely interested in literature and the arts and he became a cultured, well-read and charming person. But where public affairs were concerned he was so—so vain, was it?—so afraid of being made to look inferior, perhaps, would be a better way of putting it—that he seemed incapable of listening or learning. He knew foreign statesmen, but not a great deal about foreign politics; he could talk about Socialism, but his grasp was not very clear. He constantly felt bound to express opinions and use fine phrases about matters which he had given himself no chance of understanding. The result, as a colleague who was never his enemy said to me, was that he ceased in the course of forty years of public life to have anything in his head except fine phrases and moral gestures. "Take this as an example," said my informant. "If a problem which politicians knew nothing about, like the gold standard, arose when Mr. Lloyd George was Prime Minister, he would send for Mr. Keynes or someone like that, question him about it as an expert, and after a couple of hours would have a sufficiently good working understanding of the subject at least to talk about it sensibly and argue about it like a barrister. But if Mr. MacDonald had met Mr. Keynes during the currency crisis of 1931, he would have used the opportunity for telling Mr. Keynes all about the gold standard and what ought to be done about it." Thus he lived too long on the large store of capital which nature had endowed him with, or which he had acquired as a young man. He did not add to it, and when it was exhausted there was nothing left but emptiness and the hollow echo of great words which had once moved multitudes.

* * *

I drank sherry the other day after a gathering of enthusiasts for the cause of the Spanish Government. Quite absurd. All sherry now comes from Franco's territory; every bottle, I understand, carries a war tax, and directly helps towards a Fascist victory. If one wants to help the Government's finances, one should choose Valdepeñas or Alella, a sweet Catalan wine. You can't be consistent in this world. You cannot boycott everyone you regard as politically obnoxious. But I do bar paying for Franco's war, when I might help the Government's side. Also I doubt if the boycott of Japanese goods is really as futile a gesture as the disillusioned tend to assume. I see that twenty-five branches of Woolworths in New York have had to stop stocking Japanese goods because of the spontaneous boycott. Such a movement must mean that some rich Japanese manufacturers and merchants discover that the invasion of China is unpopular in the U.S.A.

and tell the Japanese Government so, which is likely to have more effect than a resolution of the League of Nations. This was sensibly discussed at the remarkable Queen's Hall meeting organised by the China Campaign Committee last Saturday. Remarkable, not only because it was packed and enthusiastic—you can get cheering crowds for a dozen causes—not only because Noel-Baker spoke so well and Paul Robeson sang so superbly, but to me at least because the four Young China speakers were so effective. Miss Koo, the daughter of Wellington Koo, is one of the best women speakers I've heard anywhere. The Chinese can talk to an English audience at once and be appreciated. They have the same kind of humour as we have and are not too emotional in their approach. I have seen quite a lot of the young Chinese leaders over here in the last few weeks, and I have never heard them say anything bitter. They tell you about their murdered friends and the atrocious things done at Nanking, Canton and Shanghai, and they tell you it will happen everywhere if aggression prospers, and they say that China, the most pacific of all civilisations, must now fight on to the end. They talk of Japanese aggression; but I've not heard a word of hatred of the Japanese people.

* * *

The complicated situation in Austria was vividly reflected in a minor court case the other day. Two young men were accused and sentenced to a few months' imprisonment for having obtained relief money under false pretences from a National Socialist Prisoners Aid Institution. Now, Nazism is, of course, illegal in Austria and Nazis, if active, are put into jail. But at the same time, following the July agreement with Hitler of last year, they are getting handsomely compensated—£3 to £4 for each month's imprisonment—by an officially established relief organisation, run by a former Pan-German politician (who is now, no doubt, a National Socialist). They have merely to prove that they have been in jail or concentration camp for Nazi activities. This the two boys in question did; they collected around £25 between them, and were afterwards discovered to have cheated. So, they were put into jail not because they were Nazis, but because they were not. They had, so to speak, illegally boasted of legal punishments for illegal activities and thereby imposed on the legal fund for genuine illegals. This certainly is very complicated, but goes to show, anyway, that it pays to be a genuine Nazi in anti-Nazi Austria. A state of affairs which would be more hilarious than it is if Left-wing sympathisers were not, at the same time, being charged with high treason when caught collecting relief money for Left-wing prisoners in this same Austria.

* * *

One of the most experienced of Fleet Street journalists remarked last week that in this century no man outside royalty had been given such an ovation on his departure as Canon Sheppard. Certainly there was something unique about the grief and the affection of the innumerable people who passed in an endless chain through St. Martin's, who thronged to his funeral, who still go on talking about him as their leader. His influence on men and women who worked closely with him is still more remarkable. I did not work with him and did not agree with him on some very important issues, but I understand the feeling of his colleagues. He remains constantly in one's mind as the very incarnation of a particular kind of life, the completely integrated Christian, who may have innumerable intellectual doubts and difficulties, but who no longer has emotional conflicts, no longer needs to preach or justify his Church or claim anything for himself, because he lives his own creed, is quite sure of his own fundamental beliefs and no longer wants anything for himself. He was a peculiarly English type of saint, not an ascetic, but genial and practical. The real test, as I say, is that he has left behind him in a way otherwise quite outside my experience a number of disciples, some of them well-known people and the last that one would have spotted as hero-worshippers, who could not be more sure of the immortality of his teaching and personality than if he had indeed appeared to them risen from the dead. I suppose myths will be built up about him. The myths may not be very important or interesting, but very few of us are real enough to have myths made up about us after we die.

* * *

Mr. Victor Gollancz received an order from a Japanese bookseller in Tokio. He replied that he was doing no business with Japan until her aggression was ended. I have in front of me the telegram he received in reply. It reads:

> Yours September twenty-eighth regret exceedingly you are exciting misunderstanding Japan study cautiously please be tranquil execute order immediately.—MITSUKOSHI.

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to Miss R. Wedmore.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

A girl is lying on her back on the ground in some deserted spot. Perhaps she has fallen asleep, or perhaps she is staring at the sky and her thoughts are miles away. She doesn't hear anyone approaching. But suddenly she wakes with a start. She finds a man above her. She is immediately panic-stricken. This is how she should deal with this situation.

She should clutch his arms—she will probably do this instinctively anyway—and with a sudden twist jerk her body to the left.

She should then put her right arm round his neck and speak a few cold words to him. He will be thrown off his guard and be amazed at her coolness.

She should then hold his head down close to her, tightening her grip round his neck. Then, keeping her nerve, she should *smile* at him. This, by encouraging him, will throw him off his guard again. . . .—*Daily Mirror.*

Great pleasure is expressed in the garrison at the kindness of Gen. Franco in permitting the Royal Calpe Hunt of Gibraltar to resume hunting in the neighbouring Spanish territory.

The Seville daily newspaper, *A.B.C.*, referred to sport as being a necessity to Britons, especially hunting. The newspaper mentioned the fact that the King is patron of the hunt, and it expressed the hope that the British would be more polite to the Nationalists and, in view of the concession, not describe them as insurgents.—*Daily Telegraph.*

One strange thing about my batting," Lady Baldwin once said, "was that I was frightfully nervous when I went in. But when I became engaged to Mr. Baldwin I lost my nervousness; and in the year I was married I made my best batting average—62."—*Daily Express.*

There is a strongly patriotic, beat-the-drum, up-with the-Empire and to-hell-with-the-foreigner metier, with a great deal of sentimental propaganda in favour of the old English aristocrat, in the show. Perhaps it is a sign of the overdue reawakening of national pride and confidence, with, let us hope, a realisation of the inestimable damage which Mr. Lloyd George did to the English fabric when he set out deliberately to destroy the landed families. This is reminiscent of South African War musical comedy days. Jingoism, we hope, has gone for ever, but a little propaganda such as this is to be welcomed.—*Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News.*

A woman who has had five sets of twins keeps a family of eleven children on £2 8*s.* a week—her husband's unemployment pay. Her husband has had no work for two years. A photograph of the youngest twins, who are six months old, was sent to Queen Mary by a friend. Mrs. Pledger has received a reply, signed by Lady Cynthia Colville, who adds a postscript saying: "Being myself a twin, I was naturally interested in your letter." Mrs. Pledger believes in "the old-fashioned big families." "Couples who are afraid of having children are robbing themselves of a lot of pleasure," she said yesterday.—*Sunday Express.*

In our village there are no sanitary arrangements; no services at all. No water for drinking purposes; not even in the ditches. No public lighting; not even oil lamps to help you along the roads at night. Conditions of life are the same as in the Middle Ages. Yet rates are above 12*s.* in the £.—Letter in *Daily Herald.*

A GOOD POINT ABOUT FOX-HUNTING

I HEARD two women the other day cold-bloodedly denouncing the sport of fox-hunting. One of them was for putting it down by law. The other said she would not go so far as that, but that she would like to see the newspapers forbidden to print reports of meets: she thought that if this publicity were withdrawn fox-hunting would soon cease to be looked on as a gentleman's sport and would come to be regarded by rich men and snobs and their followers as something to be ashamed of. I could not agree with her in her desire to prohibit hunting news, for it seems to me that, whatever the arguments against fox-hunting may be, there are at least three strong points in its favour—sporting prints, sporting literature—the *Irish R.M.*, for example—and the reports of hunting in the *Times*. These reports, jewelled with the names of English farms and fields and woods, are as rich in the poetry of place as any literature I know. To read them is to find one's imagination wandering by streams as strange as Abana and Pharpher. It is to come under the spell of place-names as Mr. W. J. Turner did in his boyhood when he first heard of Chimborazo and Cotopaxi.

Turn to any report at random, and you are almost sure to come on names that call up a magical countryside. For example: "The Blackmore Vale met at Horsington Manor on Saturday when scent was good. Hounds found at Tinker's Leaves and ran by the Grove Withybed, and after a check went on by Harwood Farm to Stileway, where they lost after fifty minutes. From Cucklington Wood hounds ran to Stoke Trister and Stileway." It seems to me that "Hounds found at Tinker's Leaves and ran by the Grove Withybed" is a very pretty piece of literature, conjuring up pictures in the mind by the enchantment of place-names. And what a fine gnarled thorn-tree of a name is Stoke Trister!

Take next the opening meet of the Meynell. "Hounds found in Paradise Wood and ran for a mile alongside the Derwent. They turned past Parker's Thorns and checked beyond the Gallygap road." There, again, you have words that convey a most desirable landscape. "Hounds found in Paradise Wood"—it might be the trumpet-note opening of a poem by Chesterton. The Belvoir hunted over country as picturesque though perhaps less poetical. "Finding at Sherbrookes, hounds ran towards Hickling Standard and then turned left-handed over the River Smite. With Hose Thorns on the left, they ran on to Harby Mill. . . . Entering Quorn Country, hounds ran through Welby Osier Beds and Shoby Village into Shoby Scoles." And, clearly, delight in the countryside and its names, rather than a lust for the death of the fox, was the chief inspiration of the fox-hunters. For the fox escaped, and the reporter of the meet bids him a congratulatory farewell, as from one sportsman to another. "This stout fox," he writes, "was finally lost at the Shoby cross-roads after a wonderfully good hunt of two hours."

It must be admitted that, as regards their plots, the reports of fox-hunting are a little monotonous. Either the fox escapes or he doesn't. He is perpetually being found or lost or killed. Seldom is there any variety of incident, such as the killing of a badger that got in the way of a hunt the other day. If hunting were reported like a broadcast of an Association football match, indeed, with "square sixes" and "square ones" instead of place-names to mark the position of the fox, it would be one of the dullest subjects on earth. Luckily, however, to balance the monotony of the matter, we have a perpetual and ravishing variety of names. How fortunate the Beaufort are, for example, in the nomenclature of their hunting-grounds! "An outlier," we are told, "found on Mr. Baker's farm, near Chedglow, led to Bishoper, then right-handed to Quobwells Gorse, and back towards Five Lanes." Happily for the fox on this occasion, we are living in the machine age; and "a car interfered near Bishoper, after which hounds could only hunt slowly back to their starting-point, where scent failed." A sad story, and one can picture the drooping faces of those petrol-dazed hounds hunting slowly back in quest of a more ancient and aristocratic smell. Still, no story can be entirely sad that includes the name of Quobwells Gorse. That, I take it, is a place in the "Timothy Shy" or "Beachcomber" country.

It is not often that these reports of meets strike a really tragic note, but I confess a phrase from the report of a meet of the Hertfordshire North struck me like a line of tragic poetry. The passage containing it runs: "Having killed a fox in the Litany, hounds found in French's Rushy Meadow and ran fast past Billington almost to Slepton and then left-handed through Rushy Meadow past Northall to Ivinghoe." As I read the words, "Having killed a fox in the Litany," I could not help thinking what a subject it would make for a ballad of remorse.

We killed a fox in the Litany:

One can picture the ancient fox-hunter as he tremulously confesses to passing strangers how by killing a fox in the Litany he had committed the unpardonable sin. Even the notion of shooting a fox does not horrify the healthy imagination to quite the same extent as the notion of killing a fox in the Litany. It is like murder in the sanctuary.

If I had killed a fox in the Litany, I think I should join the Heythrop, of whom we are told that, "finding in Glympton Heath, hounds ran by Leys Farm to Purgatory." There alone can men who shoot foxes and kill foxes in the Litany hope to find ultimate redemption. It is only after having endured the long and cleansing fires of Purgatory that they can expect to be allowed to chase the fox once more in Paradise Wood.

It is a strange thing that these names of obscure fields and farms should entertain the imagination more than the names of famous cities. Manchester, Leeds, and Glasgow seem tame and commonplace in comparison with Hexton Osiers, Neet-wood Gorse, Bloody Oaks and Stinsford Withybed. And who could hesitate in his choice between Moscow and Cucklington Wood? Larch Covert is a lovelier name than Berlin, and Byard's Leap fires the imagination as Oslo does not. It is possible that the names of famous places are dulled to us by use, and that the charm of the names of places in the hunting reports is partly the charm of the unknown. I feel, however, that, even if I were living at Larch Covert, I should still feel that it was more poetically named than Sheffield.

It is true, however, that, before I came to London, the names of its famous streets and suburbs used to fill me with tremors of delight. In my innocence, I longed to set eyes on Bow Street, which I imagined to be full of strange and sinister men perpetually running up and down. The Strand—before I saw it—was a golden street on the shore of a great river. Buckingham Palace was a fairy-tale castle, ablaze with light, crowded with men like gods and women like goddesses, all gay and brilliant and heroic and beautiful. I had a peculiar longing even to see Chancery Lane, and—this was before the agonies of the midnight wireless—to hear Big Ben striking twelve. Alas, there is scarcely now a London place-name that evokes in me the slightest response of pleasure. Suppose, for example, that a woman describes the route by which she has driven from Chelsea to Hampstead: how boring her journey sounds compared with the route taken by the fox from Paradise Wood to Watson's Thorns! There is nothing more deadening to the imagination than a prolonged conversation about London bus-routes. "Well, I always take a 63 bus from the corner of Farringdon Street and change at the Britannia on to a 24." "Oh, I always think it's quicker to take a Number 18 at the corner of Bride Street and go by Gray's Inn Road and Seymour Street." "Some people think it's quickest of all to get off at St. Pancras and take a Number 5 tram." "Even then, I think it's better to take a Number 3 tram past Camden Town Station and along the Prince of Wales' Road." I remember a conversation of this sort going on between a man and a woman at afternoon tea for what seemed hours. Each of them was obviously getting faint with exhaustion, but

neither of them knew how to stop, because neither of them could think of anything else to say to the other. Drowning men—in conversation—clutch at place-names.

Yet place-names in London should not seem dull. Hanging Sword Alley is a pretty good name, and Fetter Lane, Shoe Lane and Threadneedle Street would seem fairly romantic if they were the scene of a fox-hunt. The names of the public-houses—The Spaniards, the Bull and Bush, the Seven Sisters, the Six Bells, the Plasterers' Arms, the Mother Shipton, the Prodigal's Return, the Green Man—are as good and grotesque as anything in the country. And yet, somehow, by calling up pictures of red-coated motor buses instead of red-coated men on horses, they fail to stimulate. Fox-hunting may be wrong, but, so long as it continues, I hope it will continue to be reported. It is the only way in which many of us can be reminded that the England of John Bell's Whin, Cheese Hedge, Hollow Tree and Purgatory still exists. Y. Y.

DACHAU

[Those who have been imprisoned in the Concentration Camp at Dachau, ten miles from Munich, will not talk. The following account of current conditions, for whose authenticity the writer can vouch, is derived directly from members of the SS guard revolted by the regime of systematised brutality.]

EVERY Monday, Wednesday and Saturday the grey police van collects the men bound for Dachau from the Police Prison at Ettstrasse and from the headquarters of the Political Police at Brienerstrasse. There are three special " coffins " at the end of the van—compartments without light or air, where men are locked in. These are usually reserved for " bad cases," which often means men who have not confessed. Protected by four heavily armed storm-troopers, the van goes out to Dachau. On arriving within the walled camp, the men are collected in ranks and called in one after the other to the commandant's office. There they have to give full details of their history. Then, in an adjoining room, a protective custody order (Schutzhaftbefehl) is read to them. This often ends ironically by saying that the subject has been sent to the camp to become a good National-Socialist. Next, the " bad cases," who are destined for special treatment in the cells near the commandant's headquarters, are separated from the others. Under the shouts of watching SS-men the rest follow the storm-trooper who is in charge of barrack allotment. The prisoners have to leave their clothes, shoes and other effects behind and are served out with prison uniform, boots, a black wool cap, and (in a separate barrack) blue-checked linen covers for their straw mattress and pillow, an old tin bowl, spoon, fork and knife and a loaf of black bread. Thus equipped, they march to their respective barracks; their hair is cut, and camp life begins.

There are ten barracks, in two rows of five facing each other, and nine are inhabited by prisoners. No. 1 is the worst. Surrounded by barbed wire, it houses the " hopeless " cases, men who have come to the camp for the second time. No. 9 is filled with old men and invalids. Jews and " race degraders " have a barrack separated from the other prisoners, so as " not to infect them," and are never allowed to mix with them except while they work. There is also a special barrack for criminals who have been in jail already and have finished their punishment, but are kept for reformatory reasons. Another barrack is allocated solely to arrested *émigrés*, former members of the Nazi Party and homosexuals. No. 10 contains a sort of hospital and a small library. It used also to include five cells in which prisoners could be chained. These were recently given up, as some of the prisoners got frozen limbs or died in them. Moreover, it was found more convenient to place " special cases " in the cells near the commander's quarters, out of sight of the other prisoners.

Each barrack contains four or five departments (Korporal-schaften) with about 50 to 60 men in each. There are now about 2,600 prisoners at Dachau. In summer the prisoners are awakened at 4 a.m., in winter at 5 a.m., by a siren. They have a quarter of an hour in which to wash in the lavatory, make their beds, put everything in order and await their morning coffee, which is fetched by special men. By 6.30 the barracks have to be cleared. At 6.45 the prisoners assemble (except those in the cells) near the entrance gate, in their respective labour groups. The occupants of barrack No. 1 leave first for their work. They have permanent hard labour, mostly in the so-called " Abbruch-Kommando " (breaking down of old buildings) or carrying coal in baskets on their shoulders from a van to the coal store at a distance of about three-quarters of a mile. The watching SS-men constantly beat and kick these prisoners, and report them as " saboteurs," if they drop any coal from an overfilled basket. A prisoner thus reported is usually fastened to a bench. Two storm-troopers hold down his shoulders, while others beat him with ox-tails.

The other prisoners build roads near the camp, cut wood, dig drains, erect new barracks for the SS-men, clean the barracks or work at a trade—joinery, saddlery, tailoring, shoe-making, etc. Work lasts till noon with half-an-hour's interval at 9.30. After the mid-day meal, work begins again at 2 p.m. The prisoners return for supper at a quarter past six, and are usually employed on lighter work again from seven to eight. Everybody has to be inside the barracks by eight. At 9 p.m. all lights are turned out, all the windows are closed and nobody is allowed to talk. A prisoner who leaves the barrack after this time is shot. There was formerly a Catholic and a Protestant service every Sunday, but this was given up. The prisoners who attended were usually punished or maltreated, and the visiting clergymen were informed that none of the prisoners was " interested " any longer in religious services.

It is while they work that the prisoners are particularly maltreated. The SS-men or their officers usually have instructions which of the prisoners should be badly used. " Race-degraders " come off worst. One of the officers, by name Max Schmidt, who has been at Dachau since 1933 is notorious for his bestialities, which usually begin while the prisoners march out of the camp to their work. They are forced to sing songs like " My Heart is Full of Joy." Then, under some pretext, the storm-troopers kick the prisoners with their boots or hit them in the face. When work begins, the chosen victims are maltreated on the pretext they are slacking. They have to lie face-downwards in mud or nettles, are kicked (" sex-offenders " especially on the testicles) or prodded with knives. Covered with mud, exhausted, bleeding, they return to the camp, where they are reported for laziness. In the evening they are brought into a special hut outside the prisoners' camp and are beaten again by a whole troop of SS-men, while they have sometimes to count the blows in a loud voice. If the man is a " race-degrader," he is not even allowed a straw mattress during the night, but is usually locked up after the beating in a dark cell, chained, and kept on bread and water, except every third day.

Every man arriving at the camp for the second time is flogged and confined to a dark cell for at least a month, before he is allowed to enter the general camp. Since the coming of the present commandant, Loritz, conditions have become even worse than in 1933. He invented the system of beating prisoners in front of the others. He is a former policeman and shares the work by personally unfastening the trousers of the victim, and even giving the first blows himself. After their floggings, the men frequently faint. For lesser offences men used to be fastened with their arms round trees in Red Indian manner. This punishment was abandoned as, after half an hour, the men usually began to shriek like animals in pain. As an alternative, they are lashed to a post with a placard round their neck, giving the reason for this treatment.

Prisoners may send their families a postcard every fortnight. All letters they receive or write are censored, and letters are often returned to the prisoners for little reason. The prisoners are not allowed to see any relatives or friends, and only in exceptional cases their lawyer. Murders in the camp by the

guards reached their maximum probably in 1933, and after June 30th, 1934. But, even now, prisoners are often killed in the camp. Recently one man in the cells was beaten by the storm-troopers and subsequently bitten to death by the bloodhounds. Another prisoner was beaten to death by SS-men, while one of them, a man of decent antecedents, burnt the victim with his lighted cigarette in the face.

Unsuccessful suicide is punished with thirty lashes and thirty days in a dark cell. The uncertainty of the duration of their confinement in Dachau makes many prisoners try to commit suicide. There is no rule: a man found guilty of a trivial offence, but with little influence outside the camp, may stay in Dachau for years. The minimum confinement is for three months. Christmas is a bad period. Last year the storm-troopers rushed into the camp in the evening, drunk, and drove out the prisoners naked to do physical drill. The doctor in charge of the camp hospital is a storm-trooper, by name Ostermeier. He proudly says of himself that he is a storm-trooper first, and a doctor second. This seems to be true, as his chief work is to examine the prisoners before they are flogged, to see how much they can stand.

THE NEW LEAGUE

ROME's tripartite agreement shows
a white-hot coalescence;
its whole dynamic message glows
with Fascist incandescence.
Far, far beyond Geneva's reach,
pedantically legal,
this soaring and exultant screech
proclaims the Fascist eagle.

They hail the coming Fascist age
From Reich and Roman rostrum,
as now for Colonies they rage,
and now for Mare Nostrum!
And when they've purged from every land
Bolshevik desperadoes
the earth will be the Duce's (and
the Reich's and the Mikado's).

Above Geneva's stark remains
the Fascists turn the tables
and hurl totalitarian Cains
on democratic Abels,
while peace-pledged nations view with dread
their logical successor—
the new League of the anti-red
against the non-aggressor.

SAGITTARIUS

Correspondence

TWO QUESTIONS

SIR,—A. B. asked whether we pacifists would resist Mussolini or Japan if they threatened us with attack unless we continued to supply them with oil and other commodities to be used for purposes of military aggression. The reply is unequivocally—Yes, we would resist them—but not with armed force, because, as A. B. himself realises, "War has become an idiotic, indiscriminate and inefficient method of resistance." Educated under a civilisation which has been built up upon the supposition that violence is the most powerful weapon of struggle, most people find it difficult to dissociate the idea of resistance from explosives. There is, indeed, as your correspondent has noted, a new technique of resistance—and this technique can be applied to any struggles in which men may become engaged. We believe for instance, that a majority of the Spanish people could make the governing of Spain by General Franco an impossibility, and could achieve this without using military methods. It could be done by a heroic and non-violent general strike. Many supporters of liberty would lose their lives in such a struggle, but far fewer than do so in one large military engagement. Surely the impotence of British arms to subdue the Irish after the Great War and the futility of the French military adventure into the Ruhr are indications that conscience is stronger than bayonets.

These same arguments apply to China, and we may note that the Chinese, who are known to be one of the most pacific races upon earth, have been the very people to survive and preserve their particular civilisation longer than any others in history.

Superficially it may appear that, once a military struggle has broken out, the pacifist technique becomes powerless. We claim no immediate panacea for the evils arising out of the use of violence, we can but point out the source of the evil and the method of avoiding it for the future. The continued use of violence under more idealistic labels will bring us no nearer our goal.

Whitmore Farm, PHILIP S. MUMFORD
Windlesham.

LABOUR AND ARMS

SIR,—The powerful letter contributed by Mr. Wilfred Wellock to your issue of October 30th, and your leader on the same subject, truly raise "issues of major importance." May I, as one who for more than two decades has been, in his private capacity, a member of one or other Labour organisation, present one such issue?

I accept and advocate pacifism. I regard the achievement of social justice as fundamental to a peaceful world order, and support Labour's economic programme. But Labour, at the Bournemouth Conference a few weeks ago, approved a policy of vast and increasing rearmament. I know well the qualifications which are placed upon the future use of these prodigious armaments, and am ready to assume a strong desire on the part of the Conference that they will never be used. But, as you say in comment on Mr. Wellock's letter, Labour at Bournemouth endorsed "something which in practice seems very little different from preparation for a military alliance against the Fascist Powers." You rightly add:

> Though the Parliamentary Party may still think it within its rights to record a tactical vote against the Government's rearmament programme, the main result of this year's Trade Union and Party Conferences must be to give the electors the impression that in the event of a war crisis the Labour Party would be at least as ready to co-operate with the National Government as Social Democracy everywhere proved ready to co-operate with capitalist Governments in 1914. Labour, in fact, is no longer a pacifist party (though it still has a pacifist section, led by Mr. Lansbury).

Now let me state the concern of such an elector as myself. Labour's economic programme aiming at social justice retains my support, but Labour's rearmament policy runs counter to my deepest convictions. Those who know the facts will not question that this position, which I have stated in personal terms, is representative of the position of a considerable and growing body of electors. What other social cause, what political party, can command the great audiences that George Lansbury and my old friend, Dick Sheppard, and others have addressed, week in week out, on the pacifist issue? In changing its policy on armaments, is not Labour in peril of losing the moral drive which thousands of idealists contributed to its earlier propaganda?

It is understood that freedom of conscience and of advocacy is accorded to members of the little group of Labour M.P.s who are pacifists. So far so good. But I am asking *an elector's questions*. Does not the Bournemouth decision mean that in a multitude of constituencies pacifist electors will be virtually disfranchised, since most Labour candidates—like all Conservatives—will declare for a powerful navy, army and air force? What do Labour leaders anticipate that pacifists will do? Must we claim Proportional Representation as the means to a conscientious exercise of citizenship?

I put these points in a friendly and serious spirit. How would responsible Labour leaders answer them? HENRY CARTER
58 Gayton Road,
Harrow-on-the-Hill.

TROTSKY'S CASE

SIR,—There is one error of fact and, as it seems to me, one of judgment in Mr. Kingsley Martin's short note on *The Case of Leon Trotsky*. Mr. Martin doubts if the Dewey Commission is really in a better position to reach a fair conclusion than were the Russian judges, and he adds: "The one court heard only the prosecution, the other court listened only to the defence." This is a very extraordinary statement indeed. The Dewey Commission had at its disposal the two long reports of the Moscow

trials where the case for the prosecution is set forth in detail and vehemently argued by Vyshinsky. The examination of Trotsky in Mexico and of his son Sedov in Paris, as is made quite clear in the introduction, was merely a part of the Commission's investigations which included a painstaking and independent examination of the case for the prosecution. The verdict of the Commission will be based not merely on the present volume, which contains only the report of the examination of Trotsky, but also on its other extensive inquiries into all the facts of the case. Thus it may be said that the Commission will be in a better position than the Moscow court to reach a fair conclusion precisely in so far as it has at its disposal all the evidence submitted to the Moscow court *plus* all the evidence submitted by Trotsky, Sedov and other witnesses. It is difficult to see how Mr. Martin can have made so obvious an error.

In another place Mr. Martin says that " the evidence cannot in the nature of things be conclusive." Now a large part of Trotsky's evidence, like that submitted at the trials, is of a general political character and its value will doubtless be somewhat differently estimated by different people. But a substantial portion of Trotsky's evidence is concerned with refuting specific matters of fact, for example, conspirative meetings, with which he was charged at the Moscow trials. Clearly such evidence may very well, in the nature of things, be conclusive. A careful study of the present volume has convinced me that, if the documents he submitted are what they purport to be, Trotsky's evidence on a number of such points—Pyatakov's flight to Oslo, the alleged meeting with Romm in Paris, the absence of Sedov from Copenhagen, the non-existence of the Hotel Bristol—is to say the least as conclusive as any evidence accepted by an English court. The facts in these cases have, it seems to me, been established beyond reasonable doubt; and these are precisely the cases which, from the point of view of the specific charges against Trotsky, are vital to the case for the prosecution. It seems, therefore, hardly serious for Mr. Martin to lump the various types of evidence together with the remark that in the nature of things it must be inconclusive. The intrinsic importance of the case, if not a sense of justice to Trotsky, demands at least a serious consideration of this detailed evidence and an indication of why it appears to Mr. Martin to be inconclusive.

CHARLES SUMNER,
Secretary
British Committee for the Defence of Leon Trotsky,
238 Edgware Road, W.2.

NO TROTSKYISM

SIR,—We have no wish to enter into dispute with Mr. Warburg. *Left Review* is a monthly with a definite policy of forwarding the advance of Socialism in all fields of culture. Like any other paper with a policy as definite, we cannot, of course, be " impartial " in the publicity we give to books. Anyone who reads our recent issues will see that we welcome, and print, criticism from both friends and foes: but we believe there is a line at which criticism ends and destructive attacks begin, and we regret that this line separates us both from Dr. Goebbels and from Leon Trotsky. For this reason we are unwilling to give publicity to books which we believe to be destructive to our own policy.

With regard to this particular book some may accuse us of prejudging. Yes, we have prejudged. For we believe that the case of Leon Trotsky has been judged over and over again during the last fourteen years with miraculous patience and tolerance. The inquiry of which this book is the report is now fairly well known to have become, under Trotsky's intolerant domination and the kindly bewilderment of his liberal sympathisers, just another platform for his customary fulminations against the Soviet Union. A glance at our current issue (with articles by such a wide range of writers as Paul Robeson, Clough Williams-Ellis, Basil Wright, John Lehmann, etc.) will show ample reason why we are unwilling to extend our publicity to Leon Trotsky. A notice of the book will of course appear in our December issue.

As for the control of our policy, it is completely in the hands of our Editorial Board. We are thoroughly aware of the responsibility of the job we have undertaken, as the literary and cultural monthly of the Left. We welcome criticism and advice from all sides. In particular, we are sorry to have had to refuse Mr. Warburg on this occasion, but glad that he is still advertising in our columns. He has published many books which we have been in the past, and will always be, glad to advertise.

Left Review, RANDALL SWINGLER
Parton Street, W.C.1. (Editor).

CONTRACEPTION IN U.S.S.R.

SIR,—Mr. Kingsley Martin states, in his review of the Webbs' latest writing, that " contraceptives are expensive and unreliable in Russia." As far as the *reliability* goes they are no more or less reliable than in other countries and I won't argue about this point. But it is absolutely wrong to say that they are expensive.

Anyone travelling in Soviet Russia can see for himself, freely displayed in any " apteka " (chemist shop), various types of " check " pessaries (rubber, celluloid and some sort of metal) which can be had for 30 kopeks each (the price of a metro ticket or two glasses of tea!) Boxes of soluble pessaries cost one rouble and 1.50 roubles. Tubes of contraceptive ointment and various other kinds of contraceptives cost about the same price.

I have seen these in " aptekas " in small out-of-the-way villages and in " Collectives " as well as in the large towns.

Discussions take place across the counters as to which is the most suitable method of contraception and explanations with clinic addresses are given by the attendants.

31 College Street, N.1. EMILEY HOBSON

[We are informed that Mr. Martin's statement would have been true until a few months ago. We are glad to know of an important advance.—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

THE PALESTINE MANDATE

SIR,—Mr. Thomas Hodgkin's further attempt to whitewash the Arab gunmen who murdered his former colleague, Mr. Andrews, and to blacken the Palestine Government in whose employ he once held a responsible position, must make sad reading for those who prize the traditions of the British Civil Service. His arguments betray a peculiar blindness to indisputable facts.

(1) The establishment of a Legislative Council would have afforded the Arabs an adequate constitutional outlet, and would have been accepted by several of their leaders either in the form proposed by the Government or with some modifications. The functions of the Council had to be circumscribed owing to the necessity of safeguarding the articles of the Mandate which form a fundamental part of the system of government, and owing also to the inexperience of the prospective legislators and the existence of rival racial interests. Even so, the Legislative Council would have provided the Arabs with a far larger measure of self-government than they ever enjoyed under the Turkish regime, even during the last few years before the war, when they were able to send four deputies to the Ottoman Parliament in Constantinople, who failed to secure the least benefit for Palestine. The Foreign Office *Handbook on Syria and Palestine* (1920) states:

> Arab deputies heard plain words in the Chamber, and plainer if they attended meetings of the Committee of Union and Progress; the Adana massacres showed Arab-speaking Christians that they had not found a new earth, and the undisguised contempt testified by the Turks towards the Arab Moslems warned these to expect no superior offices or emoluments. . . . All spirit of Home Rule was dealt with promptly and drastically.

Owing to the disagreement among the Arab leaders on the question of the Legislative Council, the Colonial Office invited them to send a delegation to London to discuss the matter. But instead of acting upon this proposal, the Mufti of Jerusalem paid a fateful visit to Jaffa, and on the following day (April 19th, 1936) began the outbreak of murder and sabotage that has continued intermittently until the present day. The Mufti was resolved that there should be no Legislative Council, since this would have given his Arab opponents an excellent opportunity of insisting upon the publication of the accounts of the Wakfs over which a veil of secrecy has been drawn since 1930. The non-realisation of the Council is thus no justification for the policy of terrorism: it is simply an excuse advanced by those who were resolved to prevent it from coming into existence.

(2) Mr. Hodgkin tells us: " The Arab Higher Committee is, I imagine, quite honest in disowning responsibility." His imagination has played him false. The fact is that the Arab Higher Committee succeeded in stopping the terrorism before the arrival in Palestine of the Royal Commission, which shows that it exercised authority, and it could thus have prevented the revival of outrage. The Report of the Royal Commission states (p. 179):

> Nor, as far as we are aware, did the Higher Arab Committee at any time condemn the acts of sabotage and terrorism, which became more frequent as the strike continued, and the Mufti as Chairman must, in our view, bear the full share of responsibility for the disorders.

The Shaw Commission (particularly Lord Snell) pointed to the Mufti's share in the responsibility for the outrages of 1929; and

the Colonial Secretary only the other day stated that he was satisfied that the Mufti had been working against British interests in Palestine ever since he had been in office. Mr. Ormsby-Gore is probably better informed than Mr. Hodgkin.

There is not the least evidence for supposing that "the mass of the Arab people" feel "some sympathy with the terrorists," whether native or imported. On the contrary, there have been numerous instances in which leading Arabs have been murdered or injured owing to their opposition to the policy of terrorism, whilst both individuals and communities have been intimidated and blackmailed into giving the gunmen material support. The fact is that "the mass of the Arab people" are indifferent to the question of self-government, which explains why so little advantage is taken of the opportunity of participating in the municipal councils. It also explains why tens of thousands of Arabs have left Iraq and Transjordan, despite their self-government, for the superior economic conditions of Palestine that have been achieved under what Mr. Hodgkin wrongly describes as "British Imperialism."

(3) The comparison of Palestine to Nazi Germany is an insult to the Administration of which Mr. Hodgkin was formerly an official. Such a travesty of the truth can only be the product of excessive bias. Palestine, which was liberated from 400 years' stagnation under the Turkish yoke by British arms, is a mandated territory under the control of the League of Nations, whose Mandates Commission examines its Government's report and cross-examines its accredited representatives every year, besides considering any petitions from those who may complain of the Government's measures or methods. Nazi Germany, which until a few years ago had a democratic constitution, has been converted into a totalitarian State based upon military conscription, the suppression of all forms of liberty (even of religion), and the complete outlawing of a section of the population. There terrorism and oppression are the normal instruments of daily government applied to all the people alike. No struggle for "elementary democratic rights" is possible there, for if any Germans had attempted to form a body similar to the Arab Higher Committee, they would not have been tolerated and treated with official deference for eighteen months, but stood against a wall and shot—unless they had been murdered at home like General Schleicher. So far from Palestine being a "police-state" or based upon oppression, the Royal Commission emphasised the generous reserve displayed by the Administration even in the repression of the evildoers (p. 140):

> If one thing stands out clear from the record of the Mandatory Administration, it is the leniency with which Arab political agitation, even when carried to the point of violence and murder, has been treated. After each successive outbreak, punishment was sparing and clemency the rule: there was no real attempt at disarmament, nor any general repression.

This disposes of Mr. Hodgkin's apologia for the assassins who slew his former colleague. His strange ideology recalls another important finding of the Royal Commission (p. 163):

> The complaint was made by the Jews that several officers displayed pro-Arab sympathies; that, even if they did not dislike, they did not understand the Mandate and their obligations thereunder. This evidence received support from other quarters.

The Royal Commission supplies some instructive testimony under this head. Mr. Hodgkin, formerly a high official in the Secretariat of the Palestine Government, has now furnished even more striking and damning evidence.

ISRAEL COHEN

Childs Hill, N.W.2.

SIR,—You ask me what I mean by saying that we should attempt to conciliate the Arabs. I make no pretence of being able to draw up an infallible scheme of conciliation, but I can tell you what in my opinion must *inevitably* fail, and that is a policy of conciliatory words accompanied and belied by such deeds as I referred to last week. It is no good offering peace while holding a cudgel behind one's back, and no conciliatory proposals, however honestly meant, will be of much use so long as native terrorism is met by police terrorism.

A few days ago the *Wiener Tageblatt* published an article by a Jewish correspondent in Jerusalem, a very pro-British article, suggesting that the Palestine authorities had taken advantage of Sir Arthur Wauchope's absence to deal with the Arab Higher Committee much more "firmly" than he would have permitted; he must, I believe, be given credit for an attempt to keep the "big stick" at least in the background, but it has been pretty obvious all the time, as your correspondent, Mr. Hodgkin, has pointed out; and now it would appear that the policy of the "strong hand" is in the ascendant, particularly if it is true that Sir John Anderson is to be appointed High Commissioner.

I certainly do not advocate "letting the Jews go to the devil," to use your phrase, but I fear that our rulers tend to view with equanimity the prospect of that destination for Jews or Arabs or anyone else, so long as their own imperialist interests in Palestine or elsewhere are safeguarded. Only if and when the interests of the inhabitants, Arab and Jewish, are the paramount consideration, instead of being subordinated to considerations of strategy, will it be possible to evolve a truly conciliatory scheme. This I believe to be only possible if the mandate is transferred to an international authority such as the Mandates Commission, for it to work out a scheme of self-government. That might lead the way to an eventual transference of all mandates and colonies.

31 Epping New Road, S. W. H. BAYLISS
Buckhurst Hill, Essex.

EXPERIMENT IN EDUCATION

SIR,—In the course of a review last week, Mr. Joad gives an interesting discourse on education in theory and describes a valuable instance in practice at the L.C.C. Robert Montefiore School. He tells us that this experiment came to a dead stop in 1931 owing to reorganisation of the elementary schools into senior and junior. He attributes this action to economy measures and to a preference for building battleships rather than citizens. Has Mr. Joad never heard of the Hadow report of 1926, which is the basis of such reorganisation both here and elsewhere? The object of such reorganisation includes the true ends of education enumerated by Mr. Joad, and "energy, hope, faith and vision" are not lacking in those who work to make it a success.

Educational progress is not served by Mr. Joad's undeserved attack on the meanness of the community.

C. FULFORD

The County Hall, London, S.E.1.

EXPLAINED

SIR,—"Critic's" implied criticism of the *News Chronicle* for publishing as a serial a book which it had condemned in its review columns is not just. The truth is not that the *News Chronicle* reviewed the book, as "Critic" states, but that it allowed Mr. Lionel Hale to say in its columns exactly what he thought of it—a very different pair of shoes.

I, who was responsible for choosing the serial, do not happen to agree with Mr. Hale's review. That's all.

News Chronicle, PHILIP JORDAN
19-22, Bouverie Street,
London, E.C.4.

MR. GLADSTONE

SIR,—Mr. Desmond MacCarthy's criticism of the Censor's refusal to license *Mr. Gladstone* may be based on inside knowledge, and for all I know he may be aware of the motives of that official. But on the face of it there seems no reason to suppose that a Government Department, that must be aware that Queen Victoria's treatment of Mr. Gladstone has already been exposed to the public by Mr. Guedalla, should now be endeavouring to protect the Queen, who is so remote as to be the great-grandmother of the reigning Sovereign. Surely it is much more likely that the veto of the Lord Chamberlain was based on the vulgar caricature of the Prime Minister's father.

ESHER

21 Hill Street, Mayfair, W.1.

SIR,—Mr. Geoffrey West's analogy is enlightening, but perhaps not sufficiently pointed. I had always assumed that "one who suppresses, destroys or distorts evidence in the interests of party propaganda" was the accepted definition of a Conservative historian.

My point is rather whether such suppression should be permitted to a mere Court official. I am not primarily concerned with the question of the Censorship as such, but with whether, in a supposedly democratic country, the Censor should not be appointed by and answerable to the Commons instead of to the Court.

HUGH ROSS WILLIAMSON

Savage Club, S.W.1.

FLOOR-CONDITIONED

SIR,—The National Gallery is about to be air-conditioned which is all to the good. But if human lungs be stifled by musty air, how much more are human feet tired by hard shining floors? The National Gallery and every other art show in the country would be twice as popular if one could walk round easily on floors of rubber.

As it is, a thorough tour of any good-sized gallery is as exhausting as a four-hour hike over a mountain mule path.

3 Roland Gardens, ALFRED PRAGA, R.B.A.
South Kensington, S.W.7.

CLERIHEWS

SIR,—I am compiling a small anthology of "Clerihews" written by others than the Master himself. A few have found their way into print, in your own Competition column and elsewhere: but some very good ones are known to me only by oral tradition. As I have no doubt that others of merit must be current elsewhere, may I appeal to your readers for assistance in preserving any unprinted gems? JOHN CARTER

23 Bedford Square, London, W.C.1.

MRS. MOLESWORTH

SIR,—I am collecting material for a biography of Mrs. Molesworth (Mary Louisa Stewart, b. Rotterdam, 1839; d. London, 1921) a Victorian writer of children's books. I should be very grateful if anyone who has any personal recollections, letters or other records of this writer would be willing to communicate with me. RUTH ROBERTSON

69 Abbey Road,
St. John's Wood, London, N.W.8.

Dr. A. S. Parkes, National Institute for Medical Research, London, wishes us to state that he is not the author of the article entitled "The Medical Cornucopia," which appeared in the last issue of the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

Miscellany

SPANISH JOURNEY. I.

[Geoffrey Brereton has just returned from a tour of the Spanish Government territory, in the course of which he hitch-hiked some 750 miles. Travelling chiefly by lorry, he was able to visit the remoter provinces south of Madrid, and to test at first hand conditions of life among the Spanish people.]

I ARRIVED at Jaén after an all-night train journey from Valdepeñas. Valdepeñas, although on the main road from Madrid to the south, had proved a stumbling-block in my hitch-hike. For the best part of a hot October day I had sat on the pavement near the solitary petrol-pump, waiting for the lorry that did not come.

Three hundred young recruits had shuffled past me on their way to drill, and had returned three hours later marching with perceptibly greater smartness. A bilious-complexioned lieutenant-colonel had stopped his Ford car to fill up with free official petrol; but he was going north, and was no use to me. Neither were the dispatch-riders on their Royal Enfield motor-bikes, whose halting attracted a gaping crowd of youthful villagers. The high-wheeled mule-carts, jolting home with the grape harvest, had proclaimed that in war as in peace the peasant must follow the eternal round of the seasons. I had played street football with some soldiers off duty, had drunk much vermouth in a near-by bar, and had heard the story of the town's one air raid. Dusk came and I was still there. Despairing at last of the road, I had shouldered my knapsack and walked through the darkening streets to the station.

The train was crowded with soldiers going on leave. Kit and rifles encumbered the soiled cushions of the compartment. We travelled without lights, dozing fitfully, then jerking awake to roll cigarettes of brittle tobacco. Red dawn came at six. We changed at Espeluy, and by ten o'clock had reached our destination.

Jaén, the capital of a rich olive-growing province, is two hundred miles due south of Madrid and some sixty miles distant from both Cordova and Granada. Since the garrisons of both these towns revolted at the beginning of the war, it is the most considerable town in Andalusia remaining in Government hands. The nearest point of a not very active front is thirty miles away, at Porcuña

The reactions of this provincial capital towards the war are curious. It is so far from Valencia that it must, to a large degree, be left to manage its own affairs. Its position near the fighting-line gives it considerable strategic, as well as political, importance. It suffered a tragic air-raid on April 1st, to which the uncleared ruins of houses still bear witness. Seven months later they were constructing one large bomb-proof shelter which will still require many weeks to complete. The general atmosphere, in spite of all, is one of leisureliness and normality not unmixed with that Spanish fatalism which has done so much to slow the tempo of the war.

Life in Jaén is far easier than in Madrid. Sunday evening offered me a choice in entertainments: either a dance at the Town Hall or a visit to the cinema, which was showing the Marx Brothers in *A Night at the Opera*. The second-class hotel, in which I shared a large room with three others, served abundant meals, although it was obviously crowded. Meat figured regularly on the menu. The bread ration (400 grams a day, liberally interpreted) was four times as great as that in Madrid. The cafés served coffee *with milk and sugar*, and never ran short of bottled beer.

Yet the problem of food supplies is complicated here—as nearly everywhere in Government territory—by the presence of large numbers of refugees. They flocked in from Cordova, from Granada, and, later, from Málaga, fleeing before the liberating troops of Mussolini and Franco. They are lodged in requisitioned buildings—private houses, churches, convents. Their upkeep is partly provided by a municipal tax of 5 per cent. on all hotel and café bills. Some of them have been temporarily settled on the land, and incorporated in the collective schemes of the Reforma Agraria.

On Monday morning I went to call on the Civil Governor, whom I felt held the keys of power in this place. I had formed what proved to be an erroneous idea of his character by reading a notice displayed in the hotel entrance: "Hotel controlled by the U.G.T. by permission of His Excellency the Civil Governor and of the Popular Front." The words *His Excellency* had been rightly scored out in pencil by some zealous democrat.

I met, not the pompous local chieftain whom I had expected, but an extremely busy yet accessible official of forty-five. We talked of what I had sensed to be a burning topic in this town where—at the beginning of the war at least—opinions had been sharply divided. Had the Governor held many political prisoners, and, if so, what had become of them?

His principle, he said, had been to "exile" rather than to punish by imprisonment. Men and women known to be hostile to the legal Government were sent to live in towns and villages where they were not known, and where they were unlikely to be able to carry on subversive activities. Work was found for them, and on condition that they reported at intervals to the police their lives were unrestricted. At the moment, however, he held no more political prisoners, having turned over all the remainder to the duly constituted tribunal. This tribunal had acquitted entirely some 220 of them. There was a case that afternoon if I cared to attend it. I thanked him and decided to go.

In the Civil Government buildings two courts sit, one to try common offences, the other to judge cases of a political nature. I walked into the second court, whose proceedings are held in public. To all intents and purposes, it opened on to the street. Casual onlookers drifted in and out. The Bench was composed of three magistrates, of whom one, the President, was a professional lawayer. Prosecuting and defending counsel had precisely the same status before the court. The latter, who was giving his services free, was the Civil Governor's secretary.

The accused were two women, charged with acts of political propaganda against the Government of the Republic. Both were middle-aged. One, Carmen Ortega Rodríguez, was a married woman with neatly waved grey-black hair, who gave her evidence in a tearful, nervous voice. She had been awaiting trial for four months, but looked as prosperous and well-groomed as though she had just stepped out of her own house. Her companion, Concha Montesinos León, was a spinster of somewhat forbidding type. She looked sternly through a pince-nez, which was secured to her bosom by a black tape. Both admitted having belonged to Gil Robles' party, *Acción Popular*. They denied all knowledge of the political scope of the party, and insisted that they had joined it only because they thought that its object was to defend the Catholic religion. Sra. Rodríguez had two sons fighting for the Republic. It was clearly important for the defence to establish that they had enlisted voluntarily and that she had been willing for them to go. The prosecution maintained that they had been conscripted, and that the mother deserved no credit for this.

Three witnesses testified to the subversive acts of the accused. Both before and after Franco's outbreak they had publicly incited their neighbours to defy the Government. Sra. Rodríguez's husband then gave evidence in her favour. He was followed by the star witness for the defence, a young man who hobbled in with a stick, and whose entry caused a mild stir among the public. As a member of the Communist Party and the local Secretary of the United Socialist Youth, his vindication of the two women clearly carried weight. Sra. Rodríguez, he said, had protected him at the time of the Gil Robles régime, when he was being persecuted. He was a friend of her two sons, who had enlisted voluntarily. Neither she nor Srta. León had been concerned in any activities dangerous to the legitimate Government.

The final speech of the counsel for the defence would be instructive to many who still believe that it is dangerous to be a professing Catholic in Governmental Spain.

" Here," he said, " are two women who, like so many others, joined *Acción Popular* to defend what they believed to be religion, order and well-being, and perhaps also to secure the future of their sons. They were perfectly ignorant of the political nature of the party, and of its aim to prepare a revolution against the legal Government. They had been deluded into thinking that the party existed solely for the defence of their religion. What matters is not that these women may have belonged to *Acción Popular*, to the Phalanx, or to any other party. The position is that now they constitute no danger whatever to the Republican Government."

The Bench deliberated, and imposed a sentence of four months' labour in a work camp, which was considered to be already covered by the period during which the accused had been in prison awaiting trial. A fine of 7,000 pesetas (£200) was also imposed. Facilities were allowed for paying it by instalments.

The sentence was light, although the evidence did not, I felt, prove conclusively that active help had been given to Franco's cause. This, however, is relatively unimportant. The point is that the trial was public, that it was conducted entirely without bias from the Bench, and that the accused were given every facility for defence. The Spanish Government courts are using the same procedure in political as in criminal cases. How many countries in a state of war would treat their suspected enemies with as much tolerance?

While the court was clearing, the young barrister who had conducted the prosecution came over and spoke to me. He was proud—perhaps naively so—of Republican justice, and seemed genuinely glad that the sentence imposed had been shorter than he had demanded.

" My brother," he said, " was not so lucky."

" Why? "

" Franco's people shot him in La Línea."

" For bearing arms? "

" No. For belonging to the Republican Left."

GEOFFREY BRERETON

DEGAS

At Rosenberg and Helft's and at Adams Bros.

WITH Cézanne, Degas is the greatest artist of the nineteenth century, with Poussin he is one of the most perfect artists of the European tradition. His painting has been appreciated much below its real value. He was a difficult man to get on with and his art has made uneasy material for the amateur of good taste. Are his early works thin? They are certainly cold. The later phases, when the superficial attractions of ballets and café concerts are discounted, are dry and reserved. There is no convenient label for his mixture of superlative drawing, spatial relationships and photographic realism. Into his Impressionist group he fits awkwardly. Though he painted the same costumes as Renoir he enjoys no period vogue. He lacks the genial worldliness of Manet. Cézanne, his peer in isolation and abstraction, has a monumental stillness that is more easily converted into pleasure than the narrow snapshot focus of Degas. If Cézanne and Degas are both heirs to Courbet, they inherit contrary traits of that expansive figure. If Cézanne's share was a broad view, a poetical apprehension of nature in general, Degas's was an interest in human beings in particular. Degas painted no still life and few landscapes. Though his method of approach is intensely objective there is in his work no suggestion that an apple is as good an object as a man's head, or a violin as a dancer. He is aware, though, coldly of rehearsals behind performances, of the woman beneath the tarlatan. The foreword to his exhibition at the Adams Gallery quotes a story of Sickert's; Degas, varnishing a picture " of a lady drifting into a picture gallery " related how he had been moved to paint it " because he wanted to give the idea of that bored and respectfully crushed and impressed absence of all sensation that women experience in front of paintings." Bitter as it is, this is hardly the remark of a man who is abstracted from interest in his fellow-creatures. The art of Degas is abstract in the sense that from familiar forms he derives unfamiliar solutions; but the human being is always the focus. The life of his pictures cannot be divided from the liveliness depicted in them. In his own queer detached and distant way, Degas is a great humanitarian artist.

Although Degas worshipped Ingres, and always claimed him as his guiding influence, his contact with the master was not close. The *Mendiante Romaine* (painted at 23 with a student's hand) in Rosenberg's show has no sign of such an influence and the self-portrait in the same gallery scarcely any. Degas ignored Ingres' positive immobility, adored his craftsmanship. He was an ideal figure, an artistic super ego. A ghost of impeccable drawing he appears for a moment in the *Soeur du Peintre* at Adams'; in *Madame Jeantaud* (at Rosenberg's) he has almost dematerialised. The portrait of Madame Camus is significant in pointing towards a new influence. Dr. Camus was the first Frenchman to take an interest in the art of Japan.

By the time Degas was 40 the character of his art was formed. Henceforward he painted instants rather than incidents. For such work the slow medium of oil paint is unsuitable and too many pictures of this time are unfinished (among them the *Sanglier*, *Cavaliers sur une Route*, and *Musiciens à l'orchestre* at Adams'). After this, if Degas used oil paint he used it in association with a quick drying medium which produces a powdery distemper-like finish. But he used pastel more and more towards the end of the century. Photography and Japanese colour prints confirmed his natural inclination towards instantaneous and unforeseen effects. *Danseuses* of 1876 (Rosenberg's) is a lovely example of his new kind of composition. But after 1880 small oil paintings of this kind are rare. The great phase of pastel lasts until about 1905. In 1910, Degas drew the Russian ballet (a pastel of Russian dancers is at Adams'), but by this time he was nearly blind.

In giving up oil painting Degas abandoned a lovely talent. Few artists have handled paints so beautifully, so economically or so subtly. In the pastels he made up in boldness and

ingenuity what the medium lacks in finesse. The stunning pastels at Rosenberg's scintillate from layer upon layer of super-imposed hatching. In the two *Danseuses Roses* and the *Après le Bain*, Degas raises pastel to extraordinary heights. But ravishing as these wonderful works certainly are, one accepts them with slight reservations, regretting unprofitably the full tone, the greater possibilities of realisation offered by oil paint. It is unfortunate that neither exhibition includes any of the lovely bronzes Degas did in his last years. These two exhibitions, though they do not show the complete range of Degas, give in a sense an epitome of his art. Degas is the artist of the perpetual study, astonishing friends and himself by his virtuosity.

GRAHAM BELL

THE MOVIES

"Spanish Earth," at the Academy
"The New Gulliver," at the Forum
"Double Wedding," at the Empire
"Angel," at the Plaza

This week the non-commercial cinema has it, hands down. *Spanish Earth* is the eagerly awaited documentary of the Spanish war, made by Joris Ivens and Ernest Hemingway. It is a sensational film, not because it has been hotted up in distant studios, but because the events it chronicles are themselves sensational. It begins with the camera ranging widely over the great arid plain which surrounds Madrid. Irrigation plans, rejected by the landowners, are being carried out; we watch the peasants at work with the fascination that is always aroused by the spectacle of well-ordered toil, and with a momentary oblivion of war. But this is Spain, this is 1937, and we are in the village of Fuentaduena, only forty miles from Madrid on the Valencia road; the relentless camera picks us up and sets us down in the middle of the fighting in the Madrid suburbs. The soldiers have no time to be camera-conscious; they are busy with their shells; and in an instant the most confirmed of pacifists begins to grasp the fascination, in war, of sheer marksmanship, positively to long for that obstinate, isolated stronghold to be hit fair and square. We see men going into action to defend a bridge on the Valencia road; "look at their faces," says Hemingway; "they are like no other faces that you will see." But that is a touch of romance; what strikes us is the ordinariness, the everyday-ishness: war seems to be like a macabre, untidy, unamusing picnic. More terrifying, but still disquietingly ordinary, are the scenes which show an air-raid on a village. After the explosion a woman brushes dust out of her eyes; she might be turning a street-corner in a high wind. The horror is largely conveyed by the sound, which may have been added afterwards; but I doubt whether any actor in the world could invent that second scream of "*Aviacion!*" on a rising, broken note: it is unforgettable. The photography of *Spanish Earth*, which does without tricks, is admirable; so, with a few reservations, is Hemingway's commentary, finely spoken, and knowing when to be silent. What comfort is there in the film? Not much, except the dignity of the peasants, and their look of unsubduableness. Neither Franco's victory nor decades of Fascism could, we feel, steamroll the individuality out of these people.

The New Gulliver realises Swift's satire in terms of puppets. It is the most original picture that has come out of Russia for some time. Ptushko has shown the greatest virtuosity in the manipulation of his puppets, each of whom has an enormous number of interchangeable heads, so that the result is a combination of puppet play and animated cartoon. The one mortal among them is V. Konstantinov's Soviet boy-scout, who falls asleep over his favourite book and dreams that he is in Lilliput. Of course, Lilliput stands for the effete world of capitalism, whose dishonest antics the new Gulliver watches first with amusement, then with rising contempt. But the propaganda is not allowed to submerge the humour, and the essential naivety of mood is preserved through many scenes of witty satire: the meeting of Parliament, for instance, at which the idiot king's speech is produced by a gramophone record concealed beneath his robes, and the succession of superb parodies of crooner, jazz chorus, and high soprano. It was a brilliant notion to use human sounds raised one-and-a-half times above normal human pitch. The film has its ineffective and even boring sequences, but it also has grotesque and scatological fancies which would have pleased the Dean himself.

Powell and Loy are puppets too in their latest picture—but far less amusing. These charming players should remain on nodding terms with sense and politeness instead of attempting to emulate the arcadian lunacies of Groucho and Harpo. *Double Wedding* is most notable for John Beal's portrait of a young man of such unparalleled dumbness that his platitudes are as startling as other people's epigrams.

Angel is Dietrich-Lubitsch, but it is not another *Desire*. Dietrich is the wife of Herbert Marshall, in whom it is extraordinarily hard to see a brilliant and overworked expert on foreign affairs. She feels herself neglected (though *I* should have said Mr. Marshall was exceedingly attentive), and falls in love, on an incognito trip to Paris, with Melvyn Douglas; this so shakes Mr. Marshall out of his complacency that he abandons Geneva for a second honeymoon in Vienna. Not precisely original, you say; that would not matter had Lubitsch throughout been intent on fantasy. But we are expected to believe in the whole demoded caboodle; and, that being so, he should have given the two men more solidity, and called Marlene names until she consented to act instead of wilting and drooping and posing as though to the lens of Mr. Cecil Beaton. The most unmistakably Lubitschian passages in the film are the snobbish below-stairs conversations of the statesman's household. The pantry, gravely discussing foreign affairs from the inside, is worth a hundred ineffable yearnings from the old girl upstairs.

PETER GALWAY

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PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Ghosts," at the Vaudeville Theatre

To examine the dramatic framework of a tragedy is often a thankless business; and that we should feel inclined to do so is perhaps an indication that the drama selected is beginning to show signs of wear and tear. Yet Mr. Esmé Church's production of Ibsen's *Ghosts* (revived at the Vaudeville Theatre this week) prompts one or two awkward questions. Why did Ibsen further complicate the theme of syphilis by the theme of incest; and by introducing the latter did he not weaken the former? Oswald Alving's discovery that Regina is his half-sister adds nothing to the essential tragedy of his situation; for, diseased and deranged as he was, he could never have held her; while Regina's vulgar irresponsibility is in itself tragedy enough. Moreover, Regina, in Oswald's feverish imagination, stands for youth, health, hope; and the contrast between the sick, sensitive young man and the vulgar, full-blooded young woman becomes less impressive when we learn that both belong to the same tainted stock. Incidentally, is it not odd that Regina (begotten after Oswald, at a time when Captain Alving had sunk into an even deeper decrepitude) should completely have escaped contamination? And, since Mrs. Alving had apparently been in consultation with the family doctor about her husband's health—she tells the Pastor so in Act one—why had it never occurred to her that her son might be a congenital syphilitic? These queries did not entirely disappear under the influence of Miss Marie Ney's acting; and it is not until the end of the third act when, prepared for any sacrifice, no matter how ignominious, Mrs. Alving battles miserably with Oswald's utter desperation, that the play loses its slightly "period" flavour. Yet Miss Ney gives a capable and intelligent performance. Her Mrs. Alving is possibly a little too gentle—Mrs. Alving, surely, was a hard woman, with a hard woman's fierce absorption in her only son; but in the closing scene she rises to unusual heights and manages to suggest the appalling tumult of the mother's emotions. Not so good was Miss Silvia Coleridge as Regina. Her vitality, which should be radiant (though obvious and physical) expresses itself in a sort of hoydenish bounce. Oswald, a difficult part (since it is hard to believe in the young artist's talent and charm) is completely portrayed by Mr. Clifford Evans; while Mr. Stephen Murray recasts Pastor Manders in the mould of a dear, doddering old English clergyman. Only Mr. Frederick Bennett, as Regina's putative father, the rascally carpenter, Engstrand, entirely fails to convince us and sometimes supplies a definitely discordant note. He speaks his lines in the broadest of theatrical cockney, which gives a comic air to his picture of a wheedling drunkard. Engstrand should be sinister in spite of clumsiness. Played by Mr. Bennett, he suggests the plumber who has forgotten his tools.

"Richard III," at the Old Vic

This play, according to a note in the Old Vic programme, is "obviously rewritten." More probably it is the earliest play entirely the work of Shakespeare. In construction archaic to the point sometimes of absurdity, it is sustained by an almost constant stream of lovely eloquence, and anyone who cares for poetry must be grateful to the Old Vic for the opportunity of revelling in this rarely given splendour. Mr. Tyrone Guthrie, moreover, has made this production one of the Old Vic's most felicitous efforts. Handicapped by costumes which affront the eye, and a scene of which one gets dismally tired, he has lit and grouped his actors with remarkable skill. In the vision scene in the last Act he sets the ghosts stationary, like figures in a stained glass window, instead of sending them in procession across the stage from Richard to Richmond. This seems an unrepaying sacrifice of a good theatrical effect. Mr. Guthrie also too often allows the backs of the supers to conceal entirely the speaking actors. Otherwise his management is excellent, and his ingenuity has not outstripped his judgment. Mr. Emlyn Williams plays the Machiavellian villain with great gusto. In the final soliloquy full-bloodedness swells into apoplexy, and we are offered the peach-fed ham, a love of which is this accomplished actor's besetting sin. But the part is melodramatic, and during most of the play Mr. Williams keeps well within the bounds of decency; he speaks the verse very well, and altogether gives a most effective performance. Mr. Alec Clunes was excellent as Clarence and even more excellent as Tyrrel. The vituperative Queens, who sit like Norns weaving calamities, were uncommonly well presented. To Margaret, Miss Jean Cadell gave the baleful eyes of the insane, and her gaunt frame contrasted admirably with the squat soft senility of Miss Frances Waring's Duchess of York. Elizabeth Woodville, the widowed commoner whose marriage to Edward IV afforded an inauspicious precedent for a more recent wedding, was given, by Miss Ailsa Grahame, all the insolence and exuberant despair of a parvenue beauty in middle age. And Miss Angela Baddeley did well in the tricky part of Anne, though at first she was difficult to hear. The Buckingham was weak; and we wished once again that Miss Italia Conti, who trains children to act so skilfully, could be more successful in applied phonetics. But it is by Mr. Emlyn Williams's Richard that this production stands or falls. We hope that he will not play any other Shakespearean part with the exuberance he here exhibits. But he makes a gorgeous villain, and this is a production which we vehemently recommend.

Contemporary Chinese Graphic Art at 76 Charlotte Street

Chinese art, as it is generally understood, is a sacrosanct game with rules, conditions, small snobbism, small enthusiasm, much folding of hands in voluminous sleeves and endless chichi about handwriting. Even the renowned antithesis between the Northern (academic) and the Southern (free expression) schools does not seem so powerful when one sees how mild and traditional Southern artists are. In Europe and America Chinese artists swallow Western traditions whole, and are not much the better for them. This exhibition marks a new development; it is neither aggressively Chinese nor completely European. The artists are all young, and the movement they represent has only come into being during the last five years. "In their first years they were deeply influenced by expressionism. This was partly the result of poor technique and confused political outlook." After 1935 there is no such confusion. Fascism and a Chinese Colonel Blimp called Mr. Wang are recognised as the general enemies, the creation of internationally intelligible satire has become the aim. The work exhibited has nearly all been done as illustration to books and magazines, which the young artists have written and printed themselves. This is a truly popular art, for like Daumier, these caricaturists and draughtsmen have no market for drawings, only for rights of reproduction. The woodcuts, lithographs, drawings in the show are not for sale, but there is an excellent booklet (1s.) which reproduces twenty of the best things, and includes an explanatory introduction by Mr. Jack Chen, who has brought them here.

THE COMING WEEK

SATURDAY, November 13th—
- "Seed of Adam." Performance by the Chelmsford Diocesan Religious Drama Guild, Rudolf Steiner Hall, 8.30.

SUNDAY, November 14th—
- Debate: "Should Labour Support Re-armament?" Willoughby Hall, Hampstead, 8.

MONDAY, November 15th—
- Exhibition at Reimann School of Commercial and Industrial Art, 4 Regency Street, S.W.1. Till Nov. 30th.
- S.P.G.B. Meeting: "Shall We Compensate the Capitalist?" 39 Doughty Street, 8.30.
- "The Ascent of F 6," Maddermarket Theatre, Norwich.
- Palestine Habima Company, Savoy.

TUESDAY, November 16th—
- H. Runham Brown on "The Work of the War Resisters International," Friends' House, 1.20.
- Stanton Coit on "Public Opinion and the Death Penalty," Friends' House, 6.
- G. H. C. Bing on "The Powers of the Police," Small Kingsway Hall, 8.15.
- The Rt. Hon. Viscount Samuel on "Civilisation," University College, 8.15.
- Handel's "Susanna," Arts Theatre, Cambridge.
- "The Silent Knight," St. James's.
- "Cymbeline," Embassy.

WEDNESDAY, November 17th—
- The Rt. Rev. A. F. W. Blunt on "The Church and State," Fellowship House, 3.
- Kingsley Martin on "The Present World War," Conway Hall, 8.
- "Marina," Empress Hall, Earl's Court.

THURSDAY, November 18th—
- Bazaar and Fete in aid of Minister's Fund for Ethiopia, Westminster Palace Rooms, 3. And on the 19th.
- Rt. Hon. Herbert Morrison on "Socialism To-day," Friends' House, 8.30.
- Royal Philharmonic Society Concert, Queen's Hall.

FRIDAY, November 19th—
- D. N. Pritt, Victor Gollancz and Prof. Shelley Wang on "The Immediate Struggle at Home and Abroad," Memorial Hall, 8.
- "Mourning Becomes Electra," Westminster.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

THE Irish are said to spend more time thinking about the past and regretting it than the English, Scotch, or Welsh. As they contemplate the spectacle of the soft rain falling on an empty land of bogs and cabins and ruins, as they breathe in the odour of turf smoke and wet frieze, they feel melancholy and to justify the emotion they have imagined a golden age of Ireland, a civilisation of kings and harpers and saints—a time "when Malachi wore the collar of gold." Thirty years ago, when the Anglo-Irish gentry ruled the country and the Irish R.M. and Mr. Flurry Knox hunted it, it was inevitable for many Irishmen to take a gloomy view of Erin and to solace themselves with thoughts of the days "ere her faithless sons betrayed her." But the English are gone now, never to return; the rebels who lay out on the hills and fought and suffered have got their reward and all the railway stations are labelled in Gaelic and the pillar-boxes are painted green. And yet the soft rain still keeps falling and the landscape of bog and cabins has hardly changed, except that there are more ruins than there were. The spirit of melancholy, depending more on climate than on alien rulers, persists, and even those who fought and suffered and lay out with a rifle on the hills are a prey to it. They find themselves regretting the past; the days of their youth and their strength when there were plots and police-raids and their faith moved mountains. This mood of melancholy is expressed in many of Seán O'Faoláin's stories published under the title: *A Purse of Coppers* (Jonathan Cape, 7*s.* 6*d.*).

* * *

O'Faoláin's early stories were inspired by "the troubles," and *Midsummer Night's Madness* (Cape) contains the most moving record we have of the cruelty and the romance of the guerilla warfare with the Black and Tans. *The Small Lady* is a true microcosm of the murderous history of Ireland; every word in it, one is convinced, is true, yet every detail is symbolical of the conflict between the two factions, whose ferocious cruelty did not prevent intimacy, physical passion, and complete understanding of each other. In *A Purse of Coppers*, on the other hand, we are dealing with the boredom and disillusion which lie in store for all who give their youth to working for revolutionary causes (because revolutionary causes are more romantic than those of established Authority). In Burnt Hall, a little town where the ruined barracks face a broken, gap-toothed line of derelict shops, O'Faoláin runs into Sally, a girl who in the old days had been up to her eyes in revolutionary work, and who had always been chosen for the most dangerous, most important jobs. She is married to the dentist, has three children, and the pamphlets from Russia and the poems by the Rebel Leaders are tucked away on the lowest shelf behind the armchair. When she sees him fingering them she laughs, lifts her eyes comically to the ceiling and shakes her head. They walk out over the bog, but her eager talk is interrupted now by sudden pauses. He leads her on to tell her best stories about the old rebelly days and at parting they promise to meet again.

> "We'll talk until the cows come home! And then talk again until the cocks begin to crow! Won't we?" "We will," I laughed. "Of course we will!" I knew that if I had met her six or seven years before I could have said: "Sally, are you really happy here?" And she would have said: "Jesus, I'm fed to the bloody eye-teeth with this bloody hole and all in it!" But not now. . . . We never met again. I doubt if either of us wanted it or expected it. You cannot have your memories and eat them.

* * *

The emaciated old priest we meet in the railway carriage in *A Broken World* goes further, for after talking dogmatically about the need for moral unity, he tells how he left his poor mountain parish to go down into the rich plain to visit the burnt-out ruins of the houses where the gentry used to live.

> There they were—the gateposts falling. The lodges boarded up. Notices, *For Sale*. Fifteen years of grass on the avenues. . . . The rooks were cawing about the roofless chimneys just like the flakes of soot come to life again. . . . I spotted a queer little building at the end of a cypress avenue. . . . They could have sat there and drunk their tea and seen my people—the poor Ryders and Greenes and O'Tooles, making little brown lines in the far-off fields in the ploughing time. . . . I saw how the whole thing had worked, hung together, made up a real unity. It was like putting the two halves of a broken plate together. . . . They in their octagon, and we in our lighted cabins.

The priest gets out and a lethargic farmer, in the intervals of voluminous spitting on the floor, reveals that the priest had once led the young men of his parish to throw down the walls of Lord Milltown's estate and, at a loss for words, describes the priest's socialism as "some kind of faddy business." In an extremely racy and violent bit of satire, *Sullivan's Trousers*, Mr. O'Faoláin describes how a fat, rubicund dealer in pig's heads who had been a stand-by for all the "men on the run" is driven off his head by the exponents of Free State economics, who inform him that money, credit, debts, are fetishes and who add blandly as he expostulates, that they "don't think he has quite thought it out." He puts on kilts, plans to gather a community of Irishmen ready to live the life of their forefathers and exclaims: "Away with all forms of paganism; away with trowsers."

* * *

The old world and the new are contrasted in *The Old Master*, the old windbag who stands in the doorway of the court house, gassing to everyone, and giving away Egyptian cigarettes. The Russian Ballet visits Cork and the "Old Master" puts on his starched shirt and tails and rehearses the pretty speeches he will make to the dancers about the city of Cork and about himself. At the entrance to the theatre his name and address is asked by the Purity League, he realises his job in the library is at stake, and trembling with impotent misery, allows the Canon to take his arm to head the procession of protest against that indecent performance—*Les Sylphides*—being given in Cork. In *My Son Austin* a tragic ending is given to a story which we do not feel inevitably belongs to it, and for once Mr. O'Faoláin is sentimental. He may say that Tchehov set him a bad example by leaving Old Firs locked in *The Country House*, and by the Dickensian horror of *Swansong*, but actually there is all the difference. Firs and the old actor belong where they are left and could not be torn away. Dinny belongs, not indoors, but in the streets. The most successful story in the book is *Admiring the Scenery*, in which an extremely comic stationmaster sings to all the trains which stop at the station, in the hopes that one day he will be asked to broadcast, against an unexplained background of deep emotional feeling. It is interesting to compare these stories, wonderfully honest, because the author has an artist's integrity, with a volume of *The Short Stories* of Liam O'Flaherty (Cape, 7*s.* 6*d.*) which has just been published. O'Flaherty's great merit is the intense vigour which he puts into everything he writes. He is a spell-binder, shouting at his readers, and dominating them. I undervalue his work, but his short staccato sentences set my teeth on edge:

> He was eating a sandwich hungrily. He had eaten nothing since morning. He had been too excited to eat. He finished the sandwich, and taking a flask of whiskey from his pocket, he took a short draught. Then he returned the flask to his pocket. He paused for a moment, considering whether he should risk a smoke. It was dangerous.

Reading this is like driving along a pot-holed road in a car with a flat tyre. And when one gets to the end of the story—about a sniper who shoots another sniper—it is to find the wounded man looking into the face of his dead brother.

DAVID GARNETT

P.S.—Couldn't we give Goering the Free State instead of Tanganyika, and get the Irish to fight the next war while we sell munitions? They would win.

MASTER KUNG

Master Kung: The Story of Confucius. By CARL CROW. *Hamish Hamilton.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

The Analects of Confucius. Translated by W. E. SOOTHILL. Edited with an Introduction by LADY HOSIE. *Oxford University Press.* 2*s.*

A curious fact about reviewers: they always know far more than the author of the book they are reviewing. In a better world reviewers would write the books, and authors, with a becoming modesty, would review them. Let me confess, however, that till last week my knowledge of Confucius was no more than one can breathe in with the air. For such a reader Mr. Crow's biography—a life of Master Kung, not a study of Confucianism—is intended.

He has written a most vivid and fascinating book, 400 pages long, in which the background engrosses almost as much as the central figure. China in the sixth century B.C. was divided by warring dukedoms, each as often as not already disorganised by misrule, dissipation in high places, a lax bureaucracy, starving peasants. Superstition and high taxes went together. It is not surprising that Confucius, a humane and practical man, should have turned his attention to politics. Mr. Crow's interest in him is in the man rather than the founder of a religion; significantly, he gives him his native name. On one point only would I venture to disagree with him: when he says that at first *The Analects* prove "disappointing," "little more than a collection of disjointed commonplaces." I happened to read them, in the new World's Classics edition, before *Master Kung*. Commonplace—no, though some are familiar as proverbs or have been handed down to us through Christian doctrine; on the contrary, they are the profound, sensible, delicate and humorous sayings of a man one instinctively likes. I do not remember being so attracted by Plato. *The Republic*, with its snub-nosed teacher, its hare-hunting and hair-splitting, its dinner-table, its perspective of games and summer nights, was too near the Oxford in which this tradition had degenerated, for me to enjoy completely. Another atmosphere, less suggestive of the schools, pervades *The Analects*. Utopia in this case is situated not in a future ruled by logic but in the legendary past, the period of Yao, Shun and Yu, described by Mr. Crow in an early chapter, when rulers lived in comfortable austerity, people paid their taxes without compulsion, doors were left open, there were no wars and no crime, wild beasts came out of the forest to harness themselves to the plough, and even the weather was beneficent. To this racial Eden, as Mr. Crow calls it, recurring like a memory of childhood, Master Kung turned always in admiration. He disclaimed originality: "A believer in and lover of antiquity, I venture to compare myself with our ancient worthy Peng." Compared with Socrates, you might think, he would be conservative and sentimental; he is not. Except on the point of filial devotion, Master Kung is the more specifically "modern."

> The Master said: "Observe what he does; look into his motives; find out in what he is at peace. Can a man hide himself? Can a man hide himself?"

> When Chi Lu asked about his duty to the spirits the Master replied: "While still unable to do your duty to the living, how can you do your duty to the dead?" When he ventured to ask about death, Confucius answered: "Not yet understanding life, how can you understand death?"

> When the Master was travelling to Wei, Jan Yu drove him. "What a numerous population!" remarked the Master.
> "The people have grown so numerous, what next should be done for them?" asked Jan Yu. "Enrich them," was the reply.
> "And when you have enriched them, what next should be done?" he asked. "Educate them," was the answer.

Together with a strict ceremoniousness (he lived in lawless times) Master Kung elaborated a doctrine, tentative yet pungent, of how the noble man—and below him the gentleman—should behave. Often his definitions are nearer what we strive for to-day than professed Christianity.

> Someone asked: "What do you think about the principle of rewarding enmity with kindness?" "With what, then, would you reward kindness?" asked the Master. "Reward enmity with just treatment, and kindness with kindness."

> "Not to enlighten one who can be enlightened is to waste a man; to enlighten one who cannot be enlightened is to waste words. The intelligent man neither wastes his man nor his words."

The date of these sayings is about 500 B.C. It is an intelligent man, a scholar, an artist, as much as a saint, who speaks. Unlike most prophets, Master Kung distrusted the supernatural and displayed his own doctrine in statesmanship as well as teaching. Under his rule the province of Lu reached a contentment it had not known since the Golden Age; as a magistrate, he not only judged wisely, but introduced to the world the jury system, and in his reforms looked to a time when courts would be unnecessary.

The danger, to an uninstructed reader of *The Analects*, is not that he will find them commonplace, but that their distance from him in time and space will exaggerate their charm. The extracts given above are my second choice. Charm is what strikes one at a first reading, the charm of poetry and of a personality at once lofty and agreeable. Anecdotes about Master Kung—how he would not rest on a mat unless it was set straight, or fire at a sitting bird—are as revealing as his own pronouncements. The Chinese, I gather from Mr. Crow, attribute to every text an undue solemnity. Perhaps here a modern, a Western eye, can see qualities which religion has obscured. I quote to give as wide a view of Confucius as possible:

> The Master said: "I will not grieve that men do not know me; I will grieve that I do not know men."
>
> "The wise man is informed in what is right. The inferior man is informed in what will pay."
>
> Chi Wên Tzŭ used to think thrice before acting. The Master, hearing of it, said: "Twice would do."
>
> The Master said: "A man can enlarge his principles; it is not his principles that enlarge a man."
>
> "I wish I could do without speaking," said the Master. "If you did not speak, Sir," said Tzŭ Kung, "what should we disciples pass on to others?" "What speech has Heaven?" replied the Master. "The four seasons run their courses and all things flourish; yet what speech has Heaven?"
>
> The Master said: "He who heard the truth in the morning might die content in the evening."
>
> When his stable was burnt down, on coming forth from the Audience he asked, "Is anyone hurt?" He did not ask about the horses.
>
> The Master said: "Only the virtuous are competent to love or hate men."
>
> "It is all in vain!" said the Master. "I have never yet seen a man as fond of virtue as of beauty."

A few of these apophthegms—to that extent Mr. Crow is right—gain by the setting of his life. It is, as one might expect, an unusually attractive life—brave, dignified, eventful, humble, civilised to the last degree. Master Kung married young, collected taxes, left his family, wandered into exile, gathered disciples, dispensed talk, returned home, abandoned it again. He had a taste for ginger, a distrust of women and of exercise. When eating or in bed he did not talk. A clap of thunder would make him change countenance. He had a huge bump on his forehead. He was seven feet tall and ugly in proportion. G. W. STONIER

NOVELISTS ON STATESMEN

Pericles. By COMPTON MACKENZIE. *Hodder and Stoughton.* 18*s.*

Augustus. By JOHN BUCHAN. *Hodder and Stoughton.* 21*s.*

Ancient history and the lives of ancient worthies were once regarded by professional scholars as their own preserve. To-day we have changed all that, and here we have biographies of the two greatest statesmen of Greece and Rome written by two of our most popular novelists. Of course both Mr. Mackenzie and Lord Tweedsmuir have a wide experience of men and affairs, and we may rejoice that authors of their eminence should have turned their attention to the ancient world, for the Greeks and Romans were faced by the same problems as ourselves and from a study of their difficulties we may perhaps learn how to escape the dangers which now confront us.

It is, however, rather hard to see why Mr. Mackenzie sat down to write a life of "The Olympian," unless it was that he desired some relief from his recent labours in amorous meteorology. His qualifications for the task include a knowledge of modern Greece acquired during the war, which supplies a few lively anecdotes, and an imperfect acquaintance with Greek language and literature, which induces him to give some quotations from

the Attic tragedians, grievously disfigured by misprints, and to attempt some translations from Thucydides, of which more later: but frankly his book is disappointing. The information left us by our ancient authorities concerning the great Athenian statesman is very scanty, and the only way to bring him to life again is by an effort of imagination which Mr. Mackenzie, perhaps wisely, does not attempt to make. His narrative style is surprisingly wooden, and descriptive passages, such as those which gave a certain charm to his "Marathon and Salamis," are for the most part lacking. The first seven chapters of the book deal with the history of Athens down to the conclusion of the Thirty Years Peace with Sparta in 445 B.C. Then follow chapters on the Spartan and Athenian constitutions, Athenian economics, the Athenian calendar, and the buildings on the Acropolis: and so in chapter fifteen we come to Aspasia, of whom our author says: "When historians read the mutually contradictory accounts of Aspasia, some of them feel much as a senior proctor might feel if he were told that the Principal of one of the women's colleges in Oxford kept a bawdy house during the vacation. We may agree that such a combination of professions is extremely unlikely, but if we possessed evidence that the private life of an eminent bluestocking was bluer still we ought not to decide *a priori* that such an example of feminine versatility was a monster as mythical as Siren, Scylla or Sphinx." In the last three chapters we have the beginning of the Peloponnesian War and Mr. Mackenzie gives his own translation of the Funeral Speech of Pericles as reported by Thucydides. Here is a specimen:

> And we have provided for the mind many relaxations from work. We have games and sacrifices throughout the year. Our homes are furnished with good taste. Our daily enjoyment of this dispels gloom. Thanks to the greatness of our city the products of the whole world come our way, and it is our pleasant lot to garner the good things of others as securely as we garner the good things of our own land.

There are many excellent translations of the Funeral Speech, but this version cannot be put among them.

John Buchan's *Augustus* stands in a different class: it is nearly a perfect biography, quite perfect if we can agree with the estimate of Augustus's character which it puts forward; well balanced, vividly written, and beautifully produced it supersedes all the other English books now existing on its subject. It is divided into four sections, the first opening with Octavius at Apollonia in the spring of 44 B.C., "when the world appeared a tangle of knots waiting to be cut by the sword," and ending with Octavius, now Gaius Julius Caesar Octavianus, passing a law as consul to bring his adopted father's murderers to immediate trial. The second book contains the history of the critical years 43-30 B.C., when Octavian on several occasions was saved by Agrippa from defeat, the years when Antony's star was slowly sinking, to be eclipsed finally at Actium; and it ends with these significant words:

> As for the dream of the habitable world peaceful under a universal empire, the dream of Alexander and Julius and Cleopatra, the motive power to realise it must come from the West, where men could still be both disciplined and free. Behind the cold front of Octavian lay the vision, the will, and the power.

In the third book Octavian has become Augustus and is laying the foundations of the Principate, the completion of the work being marked by the Ludi Saeculares in 17 B.C., followed five years later by the death of Agrippa; the fourth book carries on the story to the death of Augustus in A.D. 14.

The narrative makes delightful reading and one person at least could not rest until he had finished the volume. If we are convinced by our author's brilliant and persuasive advocacy, well and good; but first we must listen to the other side: *amicus Buchan, magis amica veritas*. It is certain that Augustus was a very able man, that he was a prodigious worker supported by loyal assistants, and that for most of his life he was the favourite of fortune. But that he was a great man or a good man is doubtful. A great man does not go sick when the day of battle arrives, he does not attempt to kill himself when things are going against him, he does not take credit for what has been done for him by others. A good man does not commit adultery with his friends' wives, nor send innocent men to their death, nor consent to wholesale murder in order to raise money. Lastly, a good father does not allow his daughter unlimited licence, and then inflict upon her a punishment intolerably severe. It must be allowed that Augustus is a very difficult problem, and a biographer is entitled to be partial: but on the whole Tacitus and Suetonius with their judicious mixture of praise and blame seem to come nearer to the truth.

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NEW NOVELS

Imperial City. By ELMER RICE. *Gollancz.* 10s. 6d.
Men of Good Will. Book XI: To The Gutter. Book XII: To The Stars. By JULES ROMAINS. Translated by GERARD HOPKINS. *Lovat Dickson.* 10s. 6d.
Celia. By E. H. YOUNG. *Cape.* 8s. 6d.
Rebellion. By NEAL HARMAN. *Arthur Barker.* 7s. 6d.
River Junk. By MAX CATTO. *Arthur Barker.* 7s. 6d.

The unblushing banditry which crops up at every level in American life is a gift to the novelist, and American writers have taken their opportunity. It is possible that English finance, and industrial combines hold board-meetings to discuss how they can suppress progressive text-books in the schools and ensure that the rising generation shall grow up ignorant, docile and potential storm-troopers—possible, but no one believes it. When that kind of thing is done in England it is done in a different way—shall we say, on the non-intervention principle which, from the novelist's point of view, is deficient in dramatic quality. But such a scene occurs in Mr. Elmer Rice's *Imperial City*, and we believe it at once. Capitalism in New York has no reticences. The banking and industrial octopus has been watched from babyhood; it has never bothered to hide its tentacles; its frank seizure of everything that came its way has even aroused a kind of patriotic admiration from its victims.

Mr. Rice's novel opens with a Forsyte-like gathering of a millionaire's family in New York. They meet to decide how to hush up mother whose D.T.s are becoming a scandal; after the party disperses, you follow the various members back into their private burrows. The respectable head of the family goes to his mistress; another to nurse his bad arm injured at polo—and to drink; another to his university. In its third generation, in fact, the family is going to pieces. From their burrows we proceed to the burrows of their friends and acquaintances. The Professor, in rebellion against his family and all for Left-wing politics, breaks off his engagement with a lady who can't bear "the people"—she has been taken to Coney Island on a hot day. He then becomes involved in a strike in which he is up against one of his brother's directors, a typical Big Business figure in the contemporary fashion—full of uplift about the joy of work and service, but with a Black List of employees in his drawer and a system of victimisation. Gregg, the drinker, finances plays and seduces very willing young actresses. So Mr. Elmer Rice finds a way into the lives of all kinds of people who are linked to the peculiar economic designs of the millionaire family, shows them with their noses to the grindstone; and to give the thing a shape he makes Gregg continue on his mother's course and murder his wife in a fit of drunken jealousy. Here one gets the final figures of the New York picture; the psycho-analysts, the press, the stunt lawyers, the hidden witnesses and the whole farce of the law. The book ends very appropriately before the jury gives its verdict: you have had your picture of the truth behind the news and the news itself is unnecessary.

The best things in the book are the pages of theatrical life. Their dialogue is pungent and lively. There is an excellent scene when Gregg's future wife is dragged from her slum bed to be taught how to make Gregg marry her. The rest of Mr. Rice's accumulation varies in interest but is most efficiently managed. He knows the ins-and-outs of the social warren very well; his sense of scene is, in fact, considerably stronger than his sense of character, which is summary and cinematic. Too often he merely follows his people home to the arms of their mistresses, thereby thinking to illustrate love among typists, love among shop girls, love among students, film stars, etc., but not really illuminating their characters or situations. This is the old pitfall of the social realists or cameramen, and his prose is too dull to save him.

Like an idler at the Law Courts who pushes a swing door and finds himself in the dead, warm, still air of the King's Bench where counsel are droning away and turning page after page of some interminable lawsuit, so one opens the latest volume of *Men of Good Will*. How long has this been going on? Who are these people? What is the case? Is it worth listening to? One sits down and presently the droning counsel exclaims, the Bench, utters, people bob up and down, everyone is turning pages quickly as if they were racing, things take on a meaning and excitement; then once more it all dies away to the droning of the endless *dossier*. Volume XI is the case of a novelist who, having failed to get into the Academy, suffers the miserable doubts and fears of literary disappointment, and with the indefatigable literariness of the French, seeks to cure his soul by a plunge into vice. Plunge is too strong a word. This neat and fidgety Dostoevsky is really more haunted by fear about his royalties. Despite the hesitations and final fury of desire described in his diaries he achieves hardly more than a little parsimonious fumbling in the underworld, gets an ecstasy out of a ten-franc bet, makes notes on a genteel procuress (who is like some theosophist gone to the bad) and, instead of finding himself in bed with the traditional *affreuse juive*, muddles a planned assault on a young girl and blows his brains out in the Bois de Boulogne. Mr. Romains is too good a writer not to catch the dinginess, the meanness, the paralysing trivialities and calculations, proper to the subject; but he is too French not to give it a dubious intellectual glamour. The result is the bogus procuress. The succeeding volume turns to higher matters: science and medicine, the struggle of intellect and imagination with scientific problems, the unselfed lives of certain doctors and scientists. So the *dossier* goes on, sententiously, dutifully, thoroughly, intelligently. Why not? There was the Comédie Humaine; yet somehow the drifting mind finds, when the Court adjourns once more, that it is thinking not of Balzac but of Jarndyce *v.* Jarndyce.

Miss Young sounds a small voice after the full diapason of Mr. Romains and as remote as *Cranford* after Mr. Elmer Rice's New York. But she is not as small as she looks. "There's nothing that ever happened as big as what the little things mount up to as the years go," says one of her meditative characters. Little drops of water; little grains of sand—a tiresome remark; but if you submit to her at all she enmeshes you and little by little, word by word, she builds up the drama of dumb frustration in terms of the minutes of people's lives. A small town, a group of middle-aged people, their children, the unsatisfactory marriage of one of the women—that is all there is and they all chiefly sit about and talk. And gradually you are made to feel both the roundness of these people and yet the absolute emptiness, loneliness and lack of meaning surrounding every human life. Her theme is not only this and the sense of failure people have towards each other, but the almost frightening compensations. Miss Young's work seems to me the reverse side of Miss Compton Burnett's medal; the latter, brilliant, dour and perverse; the former, with a dull

General Knowledge

1. **When did Japan leave the League?**
2. **Who are the Nine Old Men?**
3. **What is the estimated strength of England's Air Force after 5 years?**
4. **Date of the Treaty of Rapallo?**
5. **Who signed it?**
6. **Name of France's present Finance Minister?**
7. **Who or what was Clausewitz?**
8. **What countries form the Little Entente?**

Answers will all be found in Stephen King-Hall's new book *The World since the War*. Those whose memory for recent events is shorter than it should be, might find the 2/6 charged for this book, with its index and useful date-list, well spent. At any bookshop.

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but wise glow, queer, puritan and resigned. Both writers depend on their dialogue: Miss Young's has a misleading kindliness, an unfailing and delightful caustic edge:

> "At least they feel like being with me—I suppose they feel they can relax comfortably in my company. So they can. So they do."

This irony blows a lively draught into the rather too cosy somnolence of her provincial moralists, and gives to those halted, hopeless attempts at sympathy, contact and understanding between people, a curious grim pathos. Hers is the least stirring but most satisfying novel on this week's list.

Rebellion is a thriller about an Indian rising in Central America. I liked the local Göring: "The body was lumpy and seemed to have been poured like ill-made gravy into his uniform tunic." And I liked the execution he attended, though I seem to have met his manner of describing the thing in one or two other books. It is plain at once Mr. Harman knows how to keep up a steady supply of surprises at the proper intervals and each slightly more surprising than the one before. When we come to Captain Spode-Smith, the villain, and the beautiful Raquel Barrios, I am not so certain. Such good narrative, such Balkan talk and behaviour; the heroine even pauses to say "ah" in the middle of her sentences: "How many women and children did you—ah—execute?" I dare not mention how radiant she was in evening dress. But the galloping, fighting, hungering, thirsting, torturing and escaping are good. The hero loses consciousness again and again, and the country sounds and smells like Central America.

Mr. Max Catto's China is sketchy but sufficient, too. A whining and scoundrelly old hypocrite of an English seaman agrees to take an ingenuous young Jew into the interior. With another white derelict and the seaman's Chinese son, Chang, they set out to exploit the young Jew and hope to rob him at cards. The devastating innocence of the boy maddens the rascals and divides them. It looks as if Mr. Catto were undecided between transferring the theme of *The Passing of the Third Floor Back* to Chinese low life and writing a plain kidnapping thriller. The Jew, though not badly done, is not adequate to the former part. The chief pleasure comes from the quarrels between Chang and his lecherous old father and the ludicrous tales these "white trash" tell one another about the only time they really loved. V. S. PRITCHETT

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and

Melanie Klein

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Love of Power; the Power of Love
The Sense of Emotional Death
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Idealizations
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The Relation to Nature
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November 15th — HOGARTH PRESS — 3s. 6d. net

FLOWERS OF MEDIOCRITY

Continual Dew. A Little Book of Bourgeois Ver

By JOHN BETJEMAN. *Murray*. 7s. 6d.

When Thomson wrote *The City of Dreadful Night*, he situat his imaginary metropolis among dreary moorlands and bl craggy fells, quaking bogs and scenes of Miltonic desolati To-day, our choice of a setting would be very different. Beyo the main quarters of the city would extend a dark limitless suburb street after street of little houses, now stiffening into prospects dismal down-at-heel respectability, with old newspapers litter beneath the laurel bushes of innumerable front gardens, no flaring into the watery brightness of Saturday shopping thorou fares, with their fried-fish shops, wireless stores and cut-pri tobacconists. Further still, we might emerge on the Great We Road. Here, through the stained-glass panels of a million flim front doors, would shine the single electric light bulb that welco hubby home from office or oil-stained garage and the kiddies ho from the new council-school across the building estate. H petrol pumps would glimmer yellow and orange. Black hulki lorries, their tarpaulin covers glistening beneath the rain, wou be drawn up at the threshold of a bungalow café; while, in t tiled palm-lounge of a large Jacobethan pub, youths in plus fou would be discussing the results of a football pool. Such is t characteristic eeriness of modern life. In such landscapes—n in the shaggy and craggy prospects that poets of an earlier a voted "awful" and alarming—the modern poet finds an epito of horror. For mediocrity is the real scourge of our middle-cl universe. The palings of the park have been pulled down. T garden-walls of the manor house have been demolished. Overhe there looms a white notice board, announcing "Sites Ripe f Immediate Development," or "Houses, Unique, Labour-savin Refined"; and, though these little houses are proof again wind and weather—though the closet flushes punctually and t radio plays—each is a tiny cube of tedium, a pocket of nothin ness. Suck your teeth reflectively to the rhythm of a dan programme. Knock out your briar on the edge of the gas-stov and so, good-night!

In this kind of eeriness, Mr. Betjeman specialises. He is writer of very remarkable wit and facility; but he is somethi more—a passionate observer of the second-rate who (just as physician might become positively enamoured of the vario morbid phenomena he has selected for clinical examination) now almost attached to the life he condemns. I am sure th Mr. Betjeman could give one a detailed and amusing catalogue the different types of outside plumbing to be found in the vil encampments of a modern bye-pass, and of the several desig of late-Victorian tin-chapel in the slums of a northern industri town. He hates and loves it for, so curious is the constitution the artist, we cannot help delighting in the things we abho (provided that the abhorrence we feel is deep enough) and a developing a sort of fascinated interest in this brave new worl of bungalow, petrol pump and wayside café, much more soli and actual nowadays than the world we respect. Mr. Betjema has made the bold move of writing verse about it. After al there *is* a strange poetry in the very mindlessness, in the dee essential vulgarity, of modern industrial civilisation. Wh sentimentalise about the passing of the manor house—that elega façade badly needs repainting: the poor old colonel was oblige to lay off another gardener last week—when we can rattle walking-stick along the dusty cast-iron railings of Palmers Gree explore the derelict factory buildings that diversify Slough, o visit a Milk Bar in Cricklewood's humming high street? A write enjoys the atmosphere of dissolution. There's more to poetr than a pylon on the Sussex Downs.

A mixture of love and hatred is the poet's strength. It i noticeable that Mr. Betjeman's least successful poems—fo instance, the vitriolic poem on Slough—are those in which h descends to downright invective. Elsewhere, he excels in pro ducing impressions of romantic horror *Death in Leamington* already well known; but I cannot refrain from transcribing it poignant conclusion—doubly poignant to any reader who (like myself) has wandered through Leamington Spa on a wet Sunda afternoon, admired the exquisite gloom of its damp red street and strayed into its public gardens, where the see-saws are chained up lest children should profane the Sabbath:

> And "Tea!" she said, in a tiny voice.
> "Wake up! It's nearly *five*."
> Oh! Chintzy, chintzy cheeriness,
> Half dead and half alive!

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"The book is a fable; and its teaching—not new to the old, but significantly new in a modern writer—is that the path to Wisdom is by way, not of learning, but of emotion."—FRANK SWINNERTON in *The Observer.*

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Do you know that the stucco is peeling?
Do you know that the heart will stop?
From those yellow Italianate arches
Do you hear the plaster drop?

Nurse looked at the silent bedstead,
At the gray, decaying face,
As the calm of a Leamington ev'ning
Drifted into the place.

She moved the table of bottles
Away from the bed to the wall,
And tiptoeing gently over the stairs
Turned down the gas in the hall.

Among poems that have received hitherto rather less attention, I recommend *Exeter* (here embellished with *art nouveau* scroll-work) *An Impoverished Irish Peer*, *The Outer Suburbs* and *Love in a Valley*, which to those who know and appreciate Surrey—particularly the districts bordering on Aldershot—will speak of that eerie county at its eeriest:

Take me, Lieutenant, to that Surrey homestead!
Red comes the winter and your rakish car,
Red among the hawthorns, redder than the hawberries
Or trails of old man's nuisance, and noisier far.
Far, far below me roll the Coulsdon woodlands,
White down the valley curves the living rail,
Tall, tall, above me, olive spike the pinewoods,
Olive against blue black, moving in the gale.

Deep down the drive go the cushioned rhododendrons,
Deep down, sand deep, drives the heather root,
Deep the spliced timber banked around the summerhouse,
Light lies the tennis court, plantain underfoot.
What a winter welcome to what a Surrey homestead!
Oh! the metal lantern and white enamelled door!
Oh! the spread of orange from the gas fire on the carpet!
Oh! the tiny patter, sandalled footsteps on the floor! . . .

The Arrest of Oscar Wilde at the Cadogan Hotel, though it lies somewhat off Mr. Betjeman's main line of country, is an accomplished period-piece; while the last poem in the book, which celebrates the death of His Majesty King George V,

Spirits of well-shot woodcock, partridge, snipe
Flutter and bear him up the Norfolk sky:
In that red house in a red mahogany bookcase
The stamp collection waits with mounts long dry . . .

crosses the frontier dividing occasional verse from lyricism. *Continual Dew* is pleasantly laid out and clearly printed. It is illustrated with the tasteful tastelessness that the subject demands.

PETER QUENNELL

PORSON

Richard Porson. By M. L. CLARKE. *Cambridge University Press.* 6s.

Whether it be that an extreme devotion to the minutiae of learning encourages eccentricity, or that men naturally extravagant, misanthropic or ill-adapted to common life find a fitting refuge in settling Hoti's business, the great scholars have frequently been distinguished by the violence and peculiarity of their characters. Their lives, consequently, make the most agreeable reading. Porson, hardly less than Bentley, makes a beautiful subject for a biographer, and Mr. Clarke's book is scholarly, appreciative, elegant and concise.

The best known description of Porson comes in a letter of Byron's:

> I have seen Sheridan drunk, too, with all the world; but his intoxication was that of Bacchus, and Porson's that of Silenus. Of all the disgusting brutes, sulky, abusive and intolerable, Porson was the most bestial, as far as the few times I saw him went. . . . He used to recite or rather vomit pages of old languages, and could hiccup Greek like a Helot. . . .

Porson in fact, drank like a lord and did not carry his wine like a gentleman. But then, he was not a gentleman. He was born in 1759, the son of a poor weaver, and his precocious talents so excited the interest of a local parson and squire that funds were raised to send him to Eton and then to Trinity, Cambridge. "An unwinning cub," he had neither beauty of person nor natural grace of manners, and presumably suffered from the disparity between his intellect and his appearance. According to his own account "he became a misanthrope from a morbid excess of sensibility." Elected to a fellowship in his own College, he was so obstinately ungentlemanlike as to entertain doubts about the Thirty-Nine Articles; he even refused to be ordained, and as the Established Church at that time had a stranglehold upon the Universities, he was forced to vacate his Fellowship, and found himself with no means of support. "I used often to lie awake," he said afterwards, "through the whole night, and wish for a large pearl." His admirers, however, soon subscribed to the purchase of an annuity, and a little later he was elected to the Cambridge Professorship of Greek. He neither resided nor gave lectures, but devoted his life to the text of Euripides and Athenaeus, to the study of Greek prosody, to wine, to tobacco, and to controversy. He was accused also, and probably justly, of writing the *Orgies of Bacchus* and *Eloisa in Dishabille*, works distinguished, Mr. Clarke tells us, respectively by profanity and indecency. (Unluckily Mr. Clarke does not allow himself to quote from either of them.) Porson, in any case, shared with the majority of classical authors and scholars a taste for the scabrous, which did not prevent him attacking Gibbon's "rage for indecency" and "disgraceful obscenities."

Porson's scholarship was distinguished by extraordinary ingenuity, patience and a mathematical exactness, rather than by any more generous humanism. And, important as were his developments of method, a reaction against the Porsonian school occurred in the middle of the last century when the Romantic Movement percolated into even the most academic circles. "The old Porsonian scholarship yielded to a greater interest in the literary content of classical poetry, and also to the demand for a widening of the scope of classical studies."

> Grant I have mastered learning's crabbed text,
> Still there's the comment.

The most conspicuous effect of Porson's powers was to add the unity of Greek Iambics to the accomplishments demanded of the English schoolboy; but even this awful legacy now enlivens or depresses the schooldays only of a dwindling *élite*. Like all scientists, the classical scholar disappears in the coral-reef that he has helped to construct. A few readings, the "law of the final cretic," and a widely used Greek type are all that remains visible of a scholarship which has, no doubt, permanently enriched the tradition of Hellenism. The

RATIONALIST TALKS

No. 6

IS THE CHURCH A "VESTED INTEREST?"

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He: Well, it's a matter of opinion. I would say that just as an army is said to march on its stomach so does the Church point the way to the New Jerusalem by means of its material resources.

She: I wonder what the Archbishop would say to that!

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eccentricity of the man is a more lively if not more valid claim to the interest of posterity. Mr. Clarke shows that sometimes the stories, those, for instance, about his forgetting to dine with his wife on his wedding-day, are not very well authenticated. But we are permitted to believe the delightful picture of the Professor of Greek "discovered near the outskirts of the town, leaning upon the arm of a dirty bargeman, and amusing him by the most humorous and laughable anecdotes." From the same source comes a charming tale of "a girl of the town, who came into his chambers by mistake, and who showed so much cleverness and ability in a long conversation with him, that he declared she might with proper cultivation have become another Aspasia." His pupil, the energetic Bishop Blomfield, wrote of him that "he had two qualities that are essential requisites in the formation of a great character—an utter contempt for money, and a religious devotion to truth." And unless you think sobriety and cleanliness are more important than these, Porson was, in fact, admirable and great. Mr. Clarke's Life of him can urgently be recommended to those who dislike the fat, wordy, superficial and unscholarly biographies that are now fashionable. It is, in fact, altogether worthy of its subject.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

AFRICAN JOURNEY

Lords of the Equator. An African Journey. By PATRICK BALFOUR. With 61 illustrations. *Hutchinson.* 12*s.* 6*d.* net.

This entertaining book by an experienced journalist will be widely read. In the Preface, Mr. Balfour disarmingly protests that it is "simply the account of a journey"—all the way from the West Coast to the Indian Ocean—a great deal of it by commercial lorry, in the company of local traders and others going about their ordinary business, with no more than casual delays and discomforts due as much to the psychology induced by life in the tropics as to mechanical breakdown. As good journalism a matter-of-fact record of what is involved in the opening up of Africa would call for little comment. Given permanence in an attractive book it invites stricter standards of criticism.

If the journey had any definite unifying purpose it was to view (rather than to study) the main group of African Mandates. This takes Mr. Balfour from the British Cameroons (which, in sharp contrast to the French sector, he regards as already almost re-Germanised), on, by way of French Equatorial Africa and the Congo, to the Belgian Mandate in Ruanda-Urundi, and ultimately to the European-settled, or as Sir Donald Cameron has roguishly called them, the *un*settled parts of Tanganyika Territory. With detachment—for the attention of those who would, or those who would not, buy peace in Europe by concessions to Nazi claims in Africa—Mr. Balfour sets out the doings and the opinions of local Germans, the pros and cons of "transfer." The political machinations of the Nazis are the new and unwholesome feature of modern German settlement.

Besides incidental but interesting sketches of little-visited parts like Angola or French Equatorial Africa, there are comments on British rule which will shock the complacency of the old-school-tie fraternity. At the swearing-in of a new Governor of Kenya "from start to finish I did not detect a reference to the African . . . but then I did not see many Africans present." This is pleasantly ironic. But Mr. Balfour has also swallowed whole the Club talk of disgruntled Settlers and proceeds, even if refreshingly, to be positively unfair. It is easy to make game of the Secretariat *wallah*, and of the excessive division of responsibility. It may be true that the older type of ex-army officer might, at his best, show more resolution than his "academic" successors. My own experience is that most of the new type spend themselves for their work, talking and thinking "shop" at all hours of day and night. If they did not break off after 4 p.m. for an hour of air and exercise it is probable that even more than actually do would crack under tropical strain. Mr. Balfour stresses the real danger that Indirect Rule may build up a privileged African bureaucracy, alienating the educated class and bolstering up chiefs against people. For the African's share, however, he quotes once more only the eight-year-old example of defalcation by a chief near Tabora, ignoring the relatively vast sums handled without default by Native Treasuries. For Africans, in fact, he has faith chiefly in the virtues of discipline, whose decay he deplores—as if the rigour which was usual in the past had produced beneficial results.

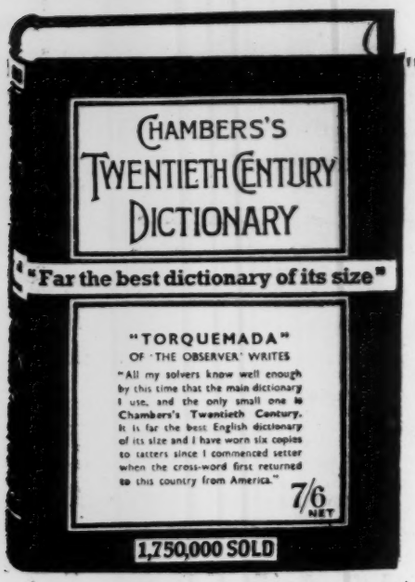
The weakness, in short, which is a danger in such a well-advertised and readable book, is that it is lacking in standards of comparison and records the talk of chance informants at face value. Its reliability depends at every point on whom the writer happened to hear, rather than on his own observation. Inexperienced readers, therefore, will at best be left in the state of mind described to me unforgettably by an eminent mining engineer, a Government official. Complaining of the political Commissions sent to review underground conditions he insisted that their first time underground, perhaps even the second and third time, they were likely to see nothing, and to feel only the vivid consciousness of being, in fact, underground! Mr. Balfour's readers will see and feel themselves to be in Africa—all the more bewilderingly so that his own interest has run strongly in the direction of emphasising, with copious illustrations, the variety of human types and habits. Occasionally he comes near to recognising that conditions affecting, for example, African health and stamina by under-nourishment are much the same in many different parts—only to break off to deplore experiment calculated to increase "the unlimited scope of African over-production." On his next African tour Mr. Balfour might profitably direct his gifts from portrayal of superficial differences to a study of the common factors underlying them.

W. M. MACMILLAN

PROFESSOR PIGOU—REFEREE

Socialism versus Capitalism. By A. C. PIGOU. *Macmillan.* 4*s.* 6*d.*

This little book—there are less than 140 pages of it, and not many words to a page—is an attempt at a completely dispassionate review of the relative merits of Socialism and Capitalism, regarded as complete and rival economic systems. They are compared consecutively from a number of different points of view, and each is awarded marks according to its merits on each round. The broad conclusion is that Socialism wins "on points," and that Professor Pigou would like to see a gradual infusion of more socialistic elements into the economic system, without any attempt to make a sudden or comprehensive change. The point of the book lies, however, much less in its very tentative conclusions than in the argument which precedes them. How do the two rival systems deal with the problem of distributing wealth and incomes,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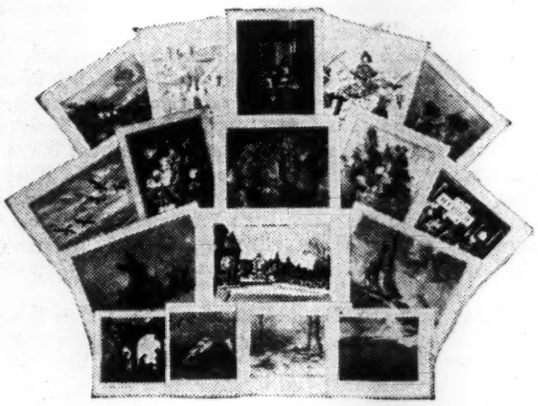

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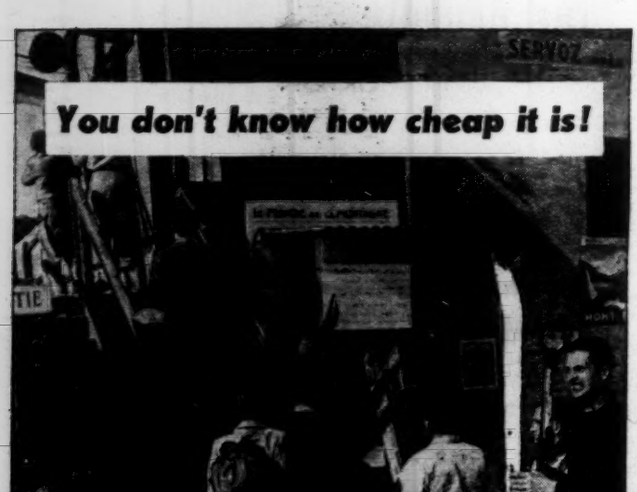

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or with the closely allied problem of allocating productive resources between alternative uses? How do they compare in respect of the amount of unemployment or employment to which they are likely to give rise? Which is the more calculated to promote technical efficiency, or to supply effective incentives to work? Is it true, as some economists have alleged, that Socialism will be without any rational means of planning, because it will necessarily lack any criterion of relative "utilities"? What is the position of "interests" under Socialism and Capitalism respectively? These are the main issues Professor Pigou raises, on the assumption that they are all alike capable of being answered in dispassionately rational terms, at all events as far as their economic aspects are concerned.

Beginning with the distribution of wealth, which is admitted to be profoundly unsatisfactory under Capitalism, Professor Pigou argues that socialisation, with compensation, would do nothing *directly* to alter it, but would alter it indirectly by making large incomes and accumulations in private hands much less necessary. On this head, Socialism scores over its rival. In respect of the allocation of productive resources, a case is established for extending the scope of socialisation, but it is held that no general case can be made for either system as against the other. Socialism is shown to be much better adapted than Capitalism for reducing unemployment to a minimum, and securing a more adequate use of productive resources. In respect of technical efficiency Professor Pigou awards the highest marks neither to socialised nor to large-scale capitalist forms of industry, but to private businesses, and concludes that as between Socialism and Capitalism no plain verdict can be given in general terms. On the question of incentive, he awards the more marks to Socialism, basing his verdict largely on the experience of the Soviet Union. Finally, to the assertion that Socialism can have no valid standard for judging between economic alternatives he answers that it can, but that it will need a system of *accounting* costs and *accounting* rates of interest to give it such a standard, and that the problems of central socialist planning will be exceedingly difficult, though not impossible, to solve in a sensible and logical way.

So much argument, conducted entirely without heat and almost entirely on the assumption that the question is purely one of social machinery, will seem arid and unconvincing to enthusiasts on either side. Certainly, the issue will never be solved, or fully stated, on this purely mechanistic plane. But it is useful to have even a part of the argument so carefully marshalled; and, even if Professor Pigou does not cause a single reader to change his mind, he may save a good many of them from the use of slipshod reasoning in support of their opinions. G. D. H. COLE

SHORTER NOTICES

Should Auld Acquaintance: An Autobiography. By WILLIAM POWER. *Harrap.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Many years ago, when Mr. Power was a young bank clerk in the East End of Glasgow, he was tempted to leave home, and he all but fell. The temptation was a job as bookkeeper in a sawmill in the Carpathians, with prospects of bear shooting and winter sports. "I had a vision of myself as a Carpathian Nimrod," he says, "with leggings, a green jacket, and a green billycock hat with feathers; I saw myself sitting beside the stove in my log cabin, studying Ukrainian, or writing my book." But the vision was not heavenly enough for him to be obedient to it. On second thoughts he decided to await deliverance *aliunde*, which came some years later when he joined the editorial staff of the *Glasgow Herald*, and had a new vision, the prophetic vision of a Scotland that had, or would have, need of him. So, taking the usual prophetic risks, he stuck to his own country and hoped for the best. After that there was only one moment when Mr. Power might have taken his talents temporarily across the Border. Just before the end of the War he was invited to join the Ministry of Information—"But I could not get the hang of the Ministry, and I returned to my turnips." Mr. Power's initial optimism was justified by the singularly successful journalistic career he has enjoyed for the last thirty years. During the first fifteen of these, it is true, he had not much liberty of prophesying, but with the arrival of the so-called "Scottish renascence" soon after the War, he found his mission, which was to be the kindly critic and propagandist of the new movement. Himself belonging to an older generation, he has earned the title of "the uncle of literary Scotland." Scotland generally gave the new writers little encouragement and not a little hostility, and but for Mr. Power's unfailing championship many might have lost heart in the struggle. How far the "Scottish renascence" represents really vital issues remains to be seen: in many respects its sum of achievement has so far been disappointing. It still suffers much from the Scot's chief vice—the vice most demoralising to the artist—lack of self-confidence. But that certainly is not Mr. Power,

ult. It must be added that, judged by his autobiography, Mr. Power himself painfully modest, and so terrified of boring his readers with personal reminiscence, that he gallops breathlessly through his life story, leaving all sorts of amusing things half told or not told at all.

GRAMOPHONE NOTES

So much important music has been released this month that there will hardly be space to discuss it all. It is first and foremost a Mozart month. The Parlophone Co. issue the second volume of their Mozart Chamber Music Society; it is, like the first, entirely devoted to violin sonatas, played by Simon Goldberg and Lili Krauss. Three sonatas make up the set of seven records: K.337 in F, K.388 in B flat, and K.380 in E flat. Performance and recording are alike not far short of perfection; and in speaking of Mozart I do not use the word idly. Anyone who tries over these records will discover that the Krauss—Goldberg combination is one of extraordinary brilliance and delicacy: if asked off-hand to name an example of true Mozartian style, we should not have to go much farther afield. They play into each other's hands with the rarest wit and tact; and Lili Krauss' scales and ornaments are as enchantingly neat as her playing of the melodies is fluid. She is perhaps slightly the dominant artist, Goldberg's violin tone being on the thin side; but there criticism stops. The three sonatas are good examples of Mozart's mature work in this medium, for which he did very much what Haydn did for the String Quartet. None of them is so deeply poetical as the G major (K.379) which was included in the first volume; but the general level of the music is more consistent in the second volume. Lili Krauss' first solo record also appears this month: a Haydn *Andante con Variazioni*, filling four sides. It is music of a simple and touching gravity, far removed from conventional eighteenth-century variation spinning; and it is difficult to imagine a finer interpretation (Parlophone).

To return to Mozart. For years we have wanted a really satisfactory version of the great *G minor Symphony* (K.550). I remember an old Columbia set by Bruno Walter, whose tender handling was obscured by poor recording. The recent Koussevitsky version was spoiled by a most absurd accelerando in the exposition of the first movement. Now here is a set from Beecham and the L.P.O. (3 Cols.) which is likely to remain standard for years to come. He uses the original version without clarinets, no doubt because the bitter tone of the oboes better suits his conception of the first movement. It is possible to look for a deeper melancholy than he gives us here; and it is unfortunate that the turn of the record obscures the pathos of that drop to F sharp minor at the beginning of the development. But the middle movements could not be bettered; neither could the finale but for a momentary lapse from the fiddles. A great set. We turn back fourteen years of that brief, packed life to the *C major Symphony* (K.200), stylishly recorded on two H.M.V.s by the Berlin College of Instrumentalists, conducted by Fritz Stein. Nobody could fail to enjoy this Lilliput symphony, whose minuet has some playful horn-echoings; at eight shillings it is a bargain. The Berlin Philharmonic conducted by Viscount Konoye (Berlin-Tokyo axis?) make a welcome record of the *Sinfonia Concertante* for wind instruments (K. Suppl. 9), a work which mysteriously disappeared just before its intended performance in Paris (1778) and only came to light some hundred years later. Indeed, there are some who doubt its authenticity, though the chain of suspensions on the muted strings at the end of the *adagio* ought to convince anyone. A pleasant work, half-way between divertimento and concerto, and very well recorded (3½ Cols.).

Finally, the *C major Piano Concerto* (K.467) gets a first recording from Schnabel and the L.S.O. (Sargent: 4 H.M.V.s). Mozart, like many other composers, was acutely sensitive to that mysterious thing called key-colour; those familiar with his work as a whole have a clear mental picture of his G minor mood, his A major mood, his D minor mood, and so on. It is customary to refer to his four C major piano concertos as more or less display-pieces. True, the first movement of this work, with its drums and trumpets, is ostentatiously laid out, rather like a formal garden; but the flowers in the beds are delightful. The slow movement, however, is a different matter, a serene *andante* full of ravishing and highly unconventional harmonic subtleties. Schnabel is at his best here, and throughout the concerto his playing is neater and more flowing than in the F major concerto of a month or two ago. Nevertheless, the choice is not the most appropriate that could have been made; Mozart, even in his profoundest moments, is almost always elegant; and elegance is not Schnabel's speciality.

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We find here and there in these records sudden rushes and awkward ornaments, which contrast unfavourably with the combined freedom and precision of, say, Landowska or Edwin Fischer. The piano sonatas of Schubert, on the other hand, have found in Schnabel their most eloquent interpreter; he plays them with such devotion and absorption that we forget the repetitions and structural weaknesses. H.M.V. have recorded on 4½ discs his performance of the posthumous *A major Sonata*, which Schubert wrote in the last month of his life. It is full of striking and wonderful passages, for example, the modulations in the development of the first movement. I hope that this excellent recording will prove popular enough to encourage the company to do the companion *B flat Sonata* as well.

The outstanding non-Mozartian orchestral record is that of Bruno Walter and the Vienna Phil. in Haydn's *Symphony No. 96 in D major* (3 H.M.V.s). Again the *andante* is the excitement here: a lovely movement in 6-8 time, full of unexpected harmonic turns and happy devices (solo violin, wind trills, etc.). Walter plays it, as he plays all music, *con amore*; and the result is a perfect little set, with the celebrated Vienna echo far less troublesome than usual and the Vienna wood-wind their incomparable selves. The Bach *Concerto for Two Violins* is rather oddly assigned by Columbia (2 records) to Szigeti and Flesch, whose very different styles do not allow the performance to develop real ease and fluidity; the H.M.V. set by Menuhin and Enesco is altogether superior. Nor can the new Columbia record of Dukas' *Apprenti Sorcier* (cond. Gaubert, 3 sides, 4th containing Fauré's *Shylock*) be considered to surpass the old two-sided H.M.V. version, conducted by Toscanini: one loses interest in these themes when they galumph instead of sparkling. On the other hand, the new H.M.V. *Casse-Noisette Suite* (L.P.O., Goossens, 3 records) is perfect; I have never heard the imitative writing for the strings in the heavenly *Danse des Mirlitons* so clearly brought out. From Tchaikovsky's irresistible *bon-bons* I turn with distaste to a portentous example of German academicism; Reger's *Variations on a Theme of Mozart*, played on 4 H.M.V.s by the Dresden State Opera Orchestra under Karl Böhm; a turgid and heavy-handed piece, culminating in the regulation double fugue. Here and there an idea gleams; but Reger, like an organist playing a congregation out, makes a very little go a very long w Dohnanyi's *Symphonische Minuten* makes an engaging contra four dapper but meaty little movements which should mak welcome addition to the very small repertory of modern lig weight music. I guess, on a first hearing, that there is m matter in this than in a score of modish acerbities from Pa The Decca recording of Wood's orchestra (2 records) shows great improvement on their recent work; the playing is as cr and lively as could be.

A lady named Yella Pessl has recorded 14 Scarlatti harpsicho Sonatas in a small, cheaply priced Col. portfolio of six recor This is an admirable addendum to the Landowska Scarla album, only one sonata being duplicated. The recording is n of the very cleanest, but the playing is most satisfactory. As the music, its colour, wit and variety are a perpetual amazeme Scarlatti was born in 1685, the same year as Bach and Hand with whose contrapuntal mentality he had, however, little common. Only a few of his nearly 600 sonatas are known concert-goers, and they are usually more or less distorted by bei transcribed for the piano. With the revival of the harpsicho comes the realisation that he is one of the most original a interesting of all keyboard composers, besides being the ancest of the modern school of virtuoso playing. His work, for all eighteenth-century grace, is by no means formal or courtly; it filled with echoes of street and country life—bells, processio dances, the song of birds—and calls up, together with the striki portrait in the Naples Conservatorium, the image of a personali ironic, modest, passionate, and contented.

Our revels are not yet ended. Here is a parcel of 18 recor containing a complete opera: Bellini's *Norma*. I played the through with the greatest interest, for, besides the famous *Ca Diva*, there are many passages of great declamatory and elegi beauty in this classical *bel canto* opera. So taxing is the name p that Lilli Lehmann used to declare one Norma to be a stiff undertaking than all three Brunhildes and a dozen Isoldes. F the technical side of this set no praise can be too high; the repr duced quality of brass and strings is superb, and the whole thin though recorded in a studio, has a quite exceptional sense reality and theatre-excitement. In the *basso* Tancredi Pasero a the fine chorus and orchestra conducted by Vittorio Gui we ha performances worthy of such reproduction. I wish I could s the same for the rest of the cast. Breviario's Pollio and Stignani Adalgisa are passable; but the opera stands or falls with t protagonist, and the Norma is—Gina Cigna. I see no point mincing matters over this singer, whom we have endured Covent Garden and may, if we are not firm, have to endure agai When singing softly, Mme. Cigna has a few charming notes in t neighbourhood of soprano F; and that is the beginning and t end of her equipment for the classic role of Norma! Armed wi a wobble like the worst stretches of a scenic railway, she goes f poor Bellini's vocal line in a tearing, hell-for-leather style that apparently much to the taste of present-day Italy. If you follo with a score, you will find that there are quantities of notes whi she makes no pretence of singing at all: her descending scales a like sliding downstairs on a tea-tray. It happened that the records arrived on the same day as a number of the admirab reprints made in America by the International Record Collecto Club of the great singers of the past—Plançon, Schumann-Hein Litvinne, Lehmann (her marvellous air from Handel's *Joshu* The contrast was ludicrous; each of these artists had built th widely different styles on the firm basis of a steady, pure *legat* and this they retained well into their forties and fifties, when th made the records in question. Their easy mastery and beauti phrasing came as balm to ears lacerated by what passes f acceptable singing to-day.

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No. 400

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RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, November 19.

2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.

3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 398

Set by Kapp

(See page 683, *N.S. & N.*, Oct. 30th.) The Editor said to me: "This picture may be a portrait of an individual, or a composite portrait of several; but it seems to me something more than a portrait." So I withhold my title; and the usual prizes, of Two Guineas and Half a Guinea, are offered to readers for the expression, in not more than one hundred words of prose or verse, of their reaction to the picture, including a title for it.

Report by Kapp

This Competition provided me with several surprises:

1. The large response: 93 entries (31 verse, 62 prose); nearly all strong and vivid "reactions."

2. The many competitors (47) who "reacted" as I had hoped but dared scarcely expect: who eschewed the facile response of "This is a gangster" (2); "This is Hit-Muss" (4—M. Bennett best); "This is a Dictator" (12—Richard Pomfret best); or "This is Fascism" (18—Joan Dempster best).

3. The paucity of witty or humorous approaches (7 only) and of distinguished writing: no entry suggested that Forster, Lewis, West, Collier or Laver were competing over a pseudonym.

4. That no one proposed as title: "Ich bin der Geist der stets verneint."

§ Among the would-be humorists I liked best C. A.'s frustrated Juan clamouring for chewing-gum to strengthen his sloppy jaws; and if I quote "Mog's"

"MEIN KAMPF
or
Next time I'll try the Brothers Goss"

as the best of the others, I may perhaps be forgiven for drawing a veil over the remainder; though I confess gratitude for the light relief of Gerald Summers' ingenious rhyming.

It has touched me to find how many readers were moved by my picture to an alert and sensitive scrutiny of it and to an understanding response. I wish I could quote extensively from the less pedestrian entries; but I must restrict myself to little but a list of those who made spirited attempts at full expression within the very narrow limit laid down: Stephen Humphreys-Owen (poor title, otherwise very near a prize):

> Surely the world can contain for him no enemy bitter enough to cause such fear. No: the world is nothing to him; it is himself he hates, and against himself his defence is directed. But he doesn't know it, poor oaf, and thinks we are his enemies!"

J. K. Sisson (nearly a prize); "Cos" (full of good things; poor title); Harry Broadbent ("Living Tool"); Doris Chesterton (spoiled by poor title); Ursula Torday ("The Forgotten Image"; good verses); Sir Robert Witt ("Evil, be thou my Good"); "Margaret Degler":

> A shadow picture of a nursery shindy lies across this face and a knot of foolish adults is the key to an approaching mania.

M. M. and I. Drazin did well; so did H. C. Duffin; "Clar," Kathleen Bartlett, J. M. Pynegar, Elizabeth Barrett and A. P. S.

The most eloquent poetic entry was in prose—that of "Electra." My limit of 100 words constrained her into some (not quite impenetrable) obscurity and lack of a title excluded her from consideration for a prize; but she must be quoted in full:

> Kamerad. Give me time, give me time, give me time. I have no power, nothing that may offend. Yet I have read books, seen visions, dreamed truth and if one fiend may compel the thoughts of man then is my birthright taken from me, though to grow hair was none of my desire. Yet if ever there were one, whose nature offered him that curse, to override Greece philosophy, wisdom, judgment, spirit of sense, and feel no itch in his hooves, this less than a man is he—flesh personified, desiccated frenzy, the thing that bound Prometheus.

In the absence of a witty or completely effective expression of an alternative view, the prizes must go to those who at least flatter me by approaching what I tried to convey in the only genuine *cartoon* I have ever drawn. The final choice is difficult, because none of these competitors achieved, any more than the others, much distinction of style.

I suggest that Margaret Corke receive First Prize. Taken all round hers is the best entry, in spite of hasty composition and several very obvious lapses. J. C. B. Date's "The Chosen" gets Second Prize. E. R. M. was runner-up with "The Legacy."

FIRST PRIZE

Sinister "strength"; and ruthlessness the more horrifying for nervous irritation. Sullen determination, fruit of long brooding; and its corollary, limited vision.

Surely a monster created by the bland cruelty of its companions. Shall we call it "Face *my* hands fashioned"?

Or—is there not honesty? dwelling on wrongs not dreamt but known? And singleness of heart? And, O God, hesitation?

Perhaps a child, or a sinner, might see here a friend in disguise, and stretch compassionate fingers. And because I could not swear there would not dawn the tremor of response, I choose rather to call it "The Darkest Hour."

MARGARET CORKE

SECOND PRIZE

The jaw is that of a Fascist, but the eyes seem rather to belong to an extremist of the opposite colour. I take the picture to be a composite symbolic representation of all those, be they Fascist, Communist, or of any other belief, who have lost all sense of tolerance or mercy in their certainty of the rightness of their own creed or leader and are ready to carry out at any cost in bloodshed and cruelty their mission of forcing humanity to their way of salvation. I should entitle it "The Chosen."

J. C. B. DATE

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 254.—WAITING FOR THE GHOST

For five nights, on the ramparts at Elsinore, Hamlet, Horatio, Francesco, Bernardo and Marcellus waited for the ghost of the first-named's father.

Each in turn spent one night peering into the darkness, while the other four, snugly ensconced in the guard-room, tackled an acrostic, a cross-word puzzle, a chess problem and a double dummy bridge problem, set by the one who was on duty.

At Bernardo's suggestion, points were awarded each night as follows:

To the chap who first solved the acrostic	1
,, ,, ,, completed the crossword	2
,, ,, ,, solved the chess problem	3
,, ,, ,, solved the bridge problem ..	4

and when all four puzzles had been solved settlement was made on the basis of each paying each. The scale of payment was 1 ducat per point-difference between each pair of solvers.

The first night when Hamlet was on duty Horatio was, on balance, the only loser. Francesco solved the bridge problem.

The third night Francesco was on duty. Both Hamlet and Bernardo lost as much as it was possible to lose.

The fourth night Bernardo was on duty. Again Horatio was, on balance, the only loser.

Marcellus was on duty the last night. Hamlet solved the acrostic and the bridge problem; Bernardo was the first to solve the chess problem; Horatio first completed the cross-word.

Taking the five nights as a whole, no one either won or lost. Special prizes were offered however to the competitors who did best in respect of each of the four classes of puzzle, and, contrary to expectation, there was no tie for any of these prizes.

Bernardo won the chess prize; who won the other three?

PROBLEM 252.—THE WOLF-CUBS' CAMP

This problem is a flop, I'm sorry to say, in that there is a number of solutions. Indeed it is quite a problem in itself to discover how many there are. My fault; having first planned the problem, I took out one datum too many.

Mr. E. T. Gill submits the following solutions:

	W	G	S
L	30	3	8
T	4	**20**	9
B	6	12	10

27	4	10
5	**18**	12
8	15	9

3	24	14
21	**6**	8
16	7	9

24	5	12
6	**16**	15
10	18	8

2	21	18
27	**4**	7
14	9	6

36	3	2
1	**18**	12
6	4	9

1	28	12
24	**2**	7
14	6	4

28	3	10
6	**20**	7
5	14	12

1	24	16
32	**2**	6
12	8	4

35	2	4
1	**20**	14
8	7	5

30	3	8
6	**24**	5
4	10	18

35	2	4
1	**28**	10
8	5	7

36	2	3
1	**27**	8
6	4	9

30	2	9
3	**15**	12
6	18	5

32	6	3
2	**24**	12
9	4	16

2	24	15
20	**3**	12
18	10	4

Marks will be awarded for any of the above.

PROBLEM 251.—THE CHARABANC OUTING

A set of Low's cartoons goes to H. W. Sindall, 33 Pickhurst Rise, West Wickham, Kent.

Seven points are awarded.

[U.S.A. Competitors. The Editor regrets that the prizes offered in our Week-end Competitions cannot apply to American competitors.]

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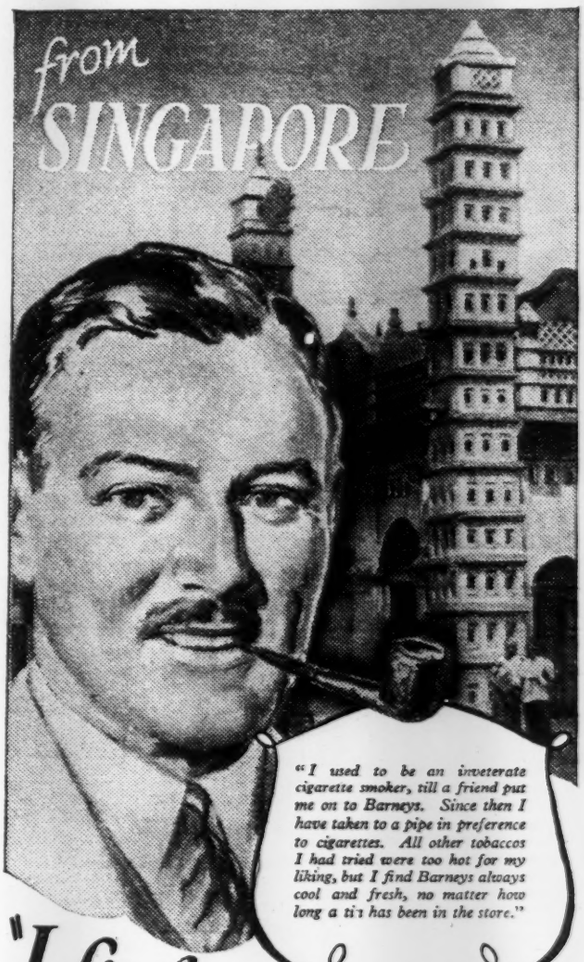
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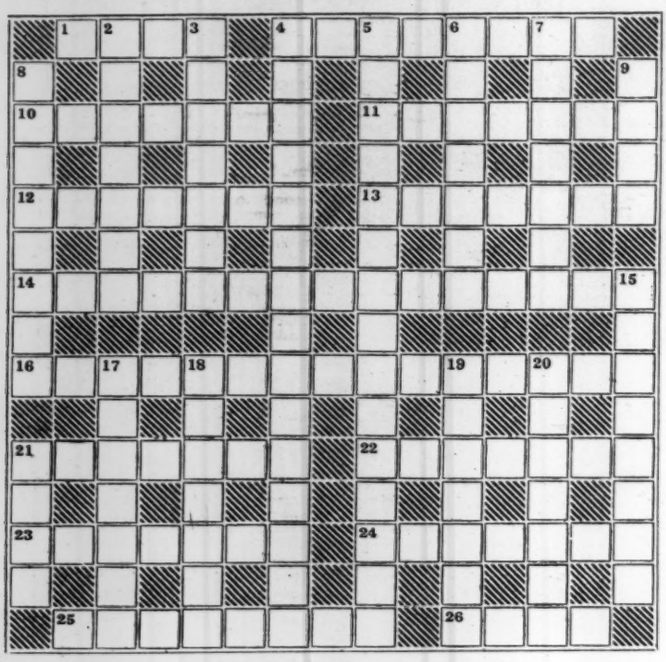


Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is
Fred Parker, 12 Castle Terrace, Berwick-on-Tweed

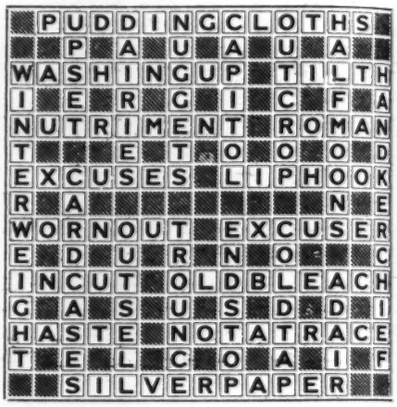
ACROSS

1. A piece of music with the soup. (4)
4. She took 8 people to the fair. (8)
10. The sort of liquor to make a pig of one. (7)
11. Live in the outskirts of Enniskillen. (7)
12. The cuckoo is never such a cuddlesome creature after growing up. (7)
13. Her boot is used as a musical instrument. (7)
14. Their work is done among ill-conditioned pagans, no doubt. (15)
16. Reparation payments. (15)
21. Jaffa's neighbour. (7)
22. Real environment of something fresh. (7)
23. Member of Parliament with his hat on. (7)
24. They are the chief of paper-makers. (7)
25. Does not sound the place for the crowd in winter. (8)
26. Not a bit convent-ionally? (4)

DOWN

2. Rupees changed to a penny. (7)
3. Call up to her. (7)
4. The Army Commander's batman and runner perhaps. (15)
5. Has a light, yet often powerful effect. (15)
6. Their work is always a grind. (7)
7. Back-handed sort of blow. (7)
8. Result of confusing Como with Nice. (8)
9. Nation for musical recital. (4)
15. Does the secret service agent drink from it? (8)
17. Blum takes one lotus. (7)
18. Veterinary surgeon in a cute position. (7)
19. Sort of honour that's dispatched. (7)
20. The most infantile state. (7)
21. Rise at the hour. (4)

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD



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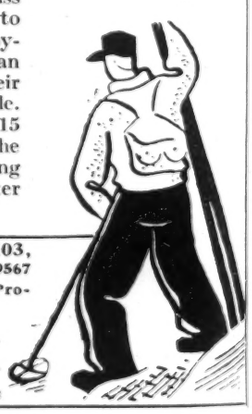

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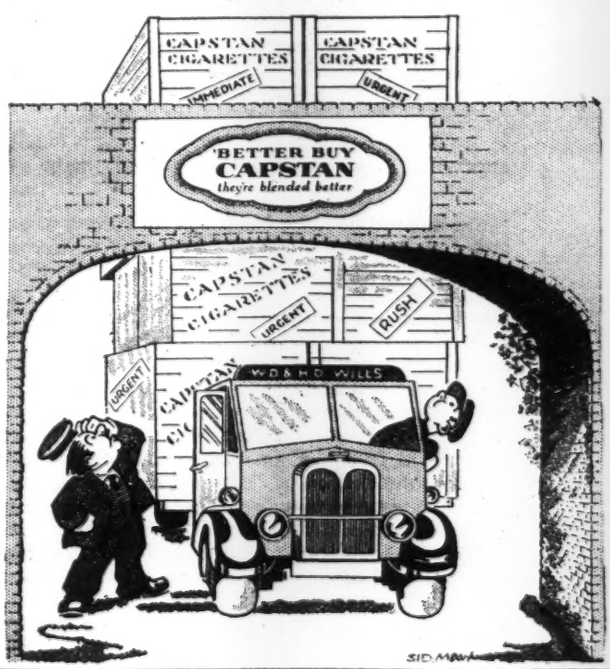

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By DIVES

WALL STREET REVIVES—STEEL PRICES—SHIPPING SHARES—
AN UNUSUAL DEAL

THE week began with another distressing slump in metals and rubber—tin falling at one time to £175 per ton (the lowest price since 1933), copper to £36 (the lowest since 1935 when restriction of output became effective), lead and zinc to £15 11/16 and £14 13/16 respectively, and rubber to 6¾d. per lb. Buyers were conspicuous by their absence. In other words, industrial consumers, particularly the American, are letting stocks run off, and I hear that some of those who are overstocked have been liquidating their stocks of metals on the market. The immediate future of the commodity markets depends almost entirely on Mr. Roosevelt. Will he—or can he—take energetic steps to prevent the decline in American business sliding into a major slump? The news mid-week suggested that a constructive programme would be announced before or in the President's message to the Special session of Congress on November 15th. The City believes that Congress will now revise the Undistributed Profits tax and the Capital Gains taxes, and it is whispered that Mr. Roosevelt will announce a new housing drive and a new rearmament programme. Open market purchases on the part of the Federal Reserve Board and a further de-sterilisation of gold are also not impossible, for the President could hardly be averse to inflationary action which does not unbalance his budget. (The deflation which America has suffered this year largely as a result of Government policy has been appalling.) At any rate hopeful expectations of this sort were responsible for a rally in the commodity markets and in Wall Street in the middle of the week, and if it can be sustained we may look for some improvement in the sorely tried speculative markets on the London Stock Exchange. While the slump in Wall Street was at its height something like a flight from the dollar took place and the American Treasury, having exhausted its ear-marked gold abroad, was obliged to export gold to France. The idea, however, that Mr. Roosevelt is contemplating a further depreciation of the dollar in terms of gold is not seriously entertained. In the City's view, the need is for Government co-operation with big business (in particular, the utilities) in making new capital investments. This, after all, Mr. Roosevelt seems to be contemplating.

* * *

Like Warren Hastings, the Iron and Steel Federation appears to be astonished at its own moderation. Since May of this year, when the last price schedule (involving considerable increases) was issued, costs of coke and imported ore have advanced substantially, and a number of the Federation's members were believed to be in favour of making hay during the shining of the rearmament sun and raising steel prices still further over the next six months. Wiser counsels have prevailed; existing prices are to be pegged until the end of 1938. The decision has been hailed in some sections of the press as statesmanlike and calculated to give a pronounced stimulus to consumption. I agree—in the sense that, with building on the down-grade and demand for constructional steel beginning to be "sticky," fresh price increases would have been extremely unwise. But is it sound policy to announce the intention of holding steel prices at their present high level for a period as long as fifteen months ahead? An immediate reduction was doubtless not practical politics. Apart from the higher costs of coke and foreign ore, railway freights have advanced, and producers who do not control their own material supplies may be finding their profit margins narrower than they were last winter. Nevertheless, steel production is still highly remunerative and over the next six months earnings in general should be good. In marking down steel shares on Tuesday because prices were not raised, the Stock Exchange was taking a very short, not to say wrong-headed, view of the position. The real case against the stabilisation decision is that the steel industry is subject to very pronounced cyclical fluctuations, and that British output capacity has been expanded to-day to the vulnerable figure of 13 million tons a year. In the past three months, the activity of the American steel trade has slumped to 40 per cent. of capacity, and the industry in France is also showing signs of flagging demand. In the sheltered British market, armaments demand will doubtless keep up the pace well into 1938, but the outlook for civil purposes consumption in, say, nine months' time is doubtful. Already shipbuilding demand for steel is being curtailed by current prices, and the future requirements of the motor industry are open to question. As the experience of the Ruhr in 1929–31 showed, there can be no more fatal policy for steel manufacturers than to refuse price concessions to consumers in a falling market. The Iron and Steel Federation would have been better advised to announce that price schedules would be reconsidered next Spring. Some potential buyers might have held back until then in hope of lower prices, but current order-books are in no urgent need of replenishment and a stimulus to demand in six months' time may well be needed.

* * *

One may still take a guardedly optimistic view as to general shipping prospects. So far as cargo shipping is concerned, however, it is well to bear in mind that experience shows that there is a close correlation between the curves of commodity prices and open-market freights—fluctuations in the latter tending to be slightly more extreme. The continuing fall in the price of primary products is not a bull point for shipping shares, and grain freights have recently weakened. Two months ago in this column I recommended Court Line, France Fenwick and King Line as promising "tramp" shares. Since my original recommendation these shares have been several shillings higher, but they participated in October's general market set-back and are now roughly 15 per cent. below their end-August quotations. I see no reason to revise my estimate of these companies' probable current earnings; but, in view of the now more doubtful outlook for world trade in 1938, there does not seem much to "go for" in the shares at present, and since shipping is highly vulnerable to even a mild cyclical depression, holders might consider selling.

* * *

Students of the more Machiavellian experts of company finance will find diversion in the reconstruction scheme propounded by the directors of Branston Artificial Silk. In the field of rayon manufacture the company fared ill, and its assets were duly converted into cash—with a view, it was generally assumed, to voluntary liquidation. The board, however, now proposes to buy a jam-making business, whose directors offer to buy from existing Branston shareholders up to 500,000 shares at 6*d*. per share above the current market quotation, provided that the vendors of these shares lodge proxies in favour of the deal. Thus shareholders who are in favour of liquidating the Branston company and do not wish the remains of their investment to be staked on jam are placed in the anomalous position that their best apparent chance of getting out is in voting for a scheme of which they disapprove. Furthermore, supposing the deal goes through, a company engaged in manufacturing jam will have an official stock-exchange quotation for its shares under the Branston title without having had to furnish to the investing public any of the information required by law or the Stock Exchange Committee. How does the Committee propose to deal with this evasion of its requirements?

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- Between Singapore and Brisbane the line is operated . . . by *Qantas Empire Airways*, an Australian company associated with us. This company increased its traffic by nearly 85%. . . This substantial growth . . . is . . . in no small part due to the efficiency and keenness of our partners
- Bermuda–New York service . . . in June last a once-weekly service was commenced in conjunction with *Pan American Airways*, . . . the demand for accommodation has been encouraging
- Last year . . . the first of the fleet of twenty-eight of our *Empire* flying-boats had completed its trials with outstanding success . . . the subsequent delivery of the others of the fleet has been a triumph of production. . . . These aircraft are, I believe, the fastest commercial flying-boats in the world
- The *Cambria* has to her credit the fastest crossing of the Atlantic in 10 hours 36 minutes
- The *Short Mayo-Composite* aircraft . . . has now reached an advanced stage in her flying trials
- The big expansion in our services required to carry out . . . our new agreement with the Government for the main Empire lines will, we hope, be completed by early next summer; . . . the new fleet should be in operation over the whole of the lines to Australia and to South Africa with the frequency of service planned
- I sincerely hope that before I address you again the extension of the main line to New Zealand will be well on its way towards being established, if it is not actually in operation
- *A dividend on the ordinary shares of the Company of 7% plus a bonus of 2%, both less tax, were declared as compared with a dividend of 6% plus a bonus of 2%, both less tax, for the previous year. The net profit for the year was £164,735 compared with £140,705 for the previous year*

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